MEGA

350 Mega Drive tips

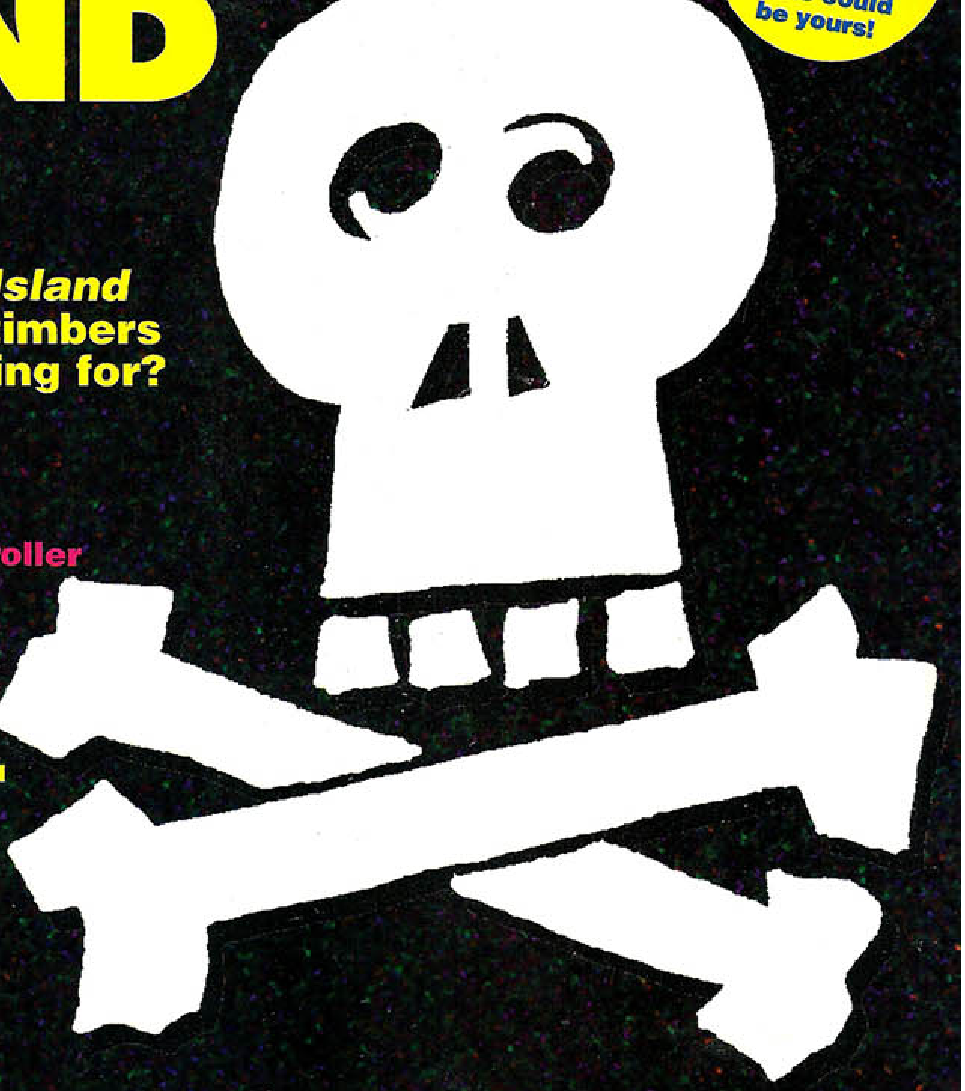
100% PURE SEGA MEGA DRIVE...

March 1993 Issue 6 £1.95

WIN! £2,000 OF CARTS! 52 Mega Drive carts could be yours!

DESERT ISLAND DISC

The Secret Of Monkey Island shivers the Mega CD's timbers – is it *really* worth fighting for?



HOT NEWS!

For your Mega Drive in '93:

- Body-movement game controller
- 3D Virtual Reality helmet
- Laser Disc Drive

GOT A MEGA DRIVE?

Read what Sega *didn't* tell you

SONIC 2 LEVEL SELECT!

It *does* exist – we found it!

DO ALL US GUYS REALLY WANT TO *SNOG* VIOLET BERLIN?

Just how sexist are video games? And how does TV's girlie gamer feel it affects her?

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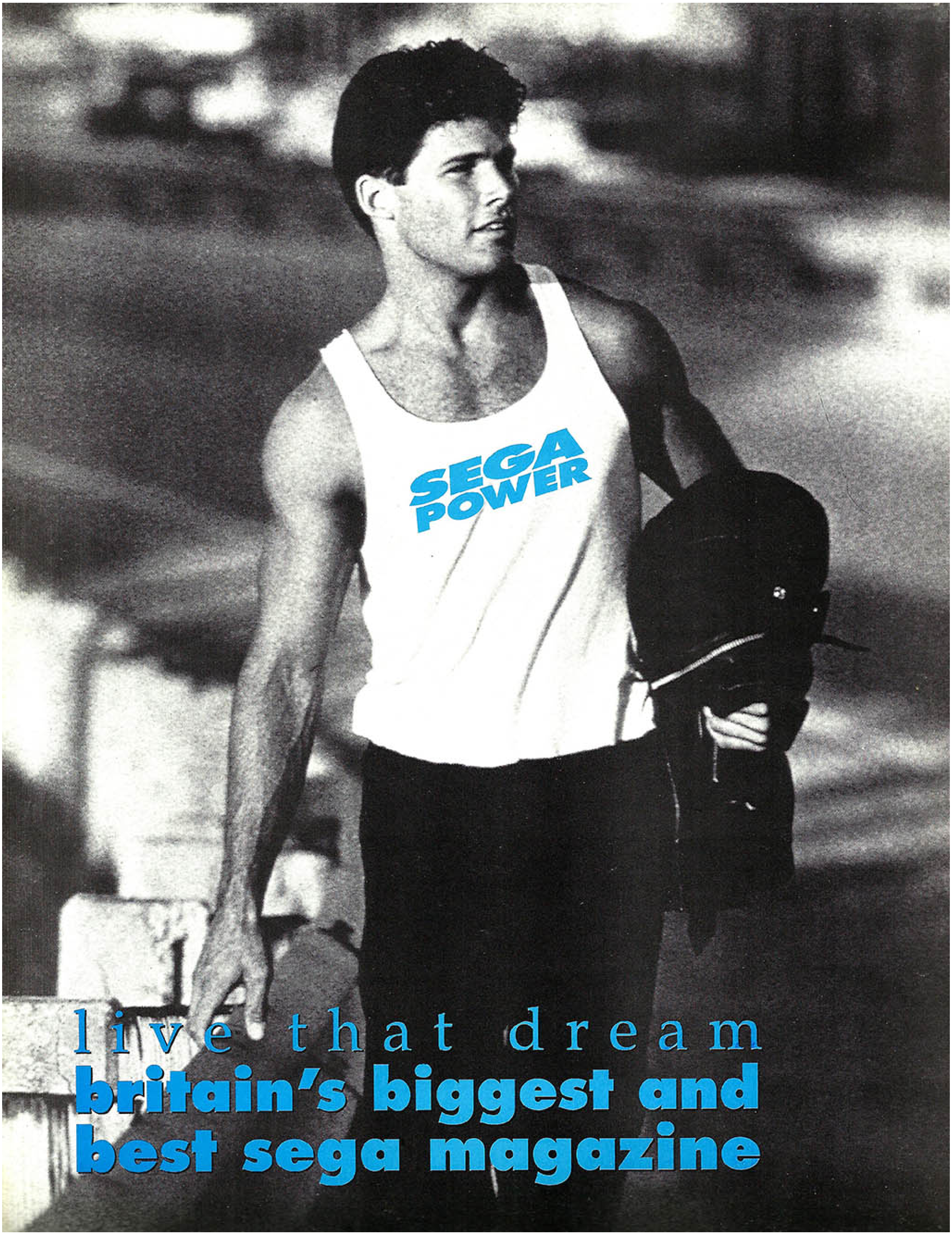
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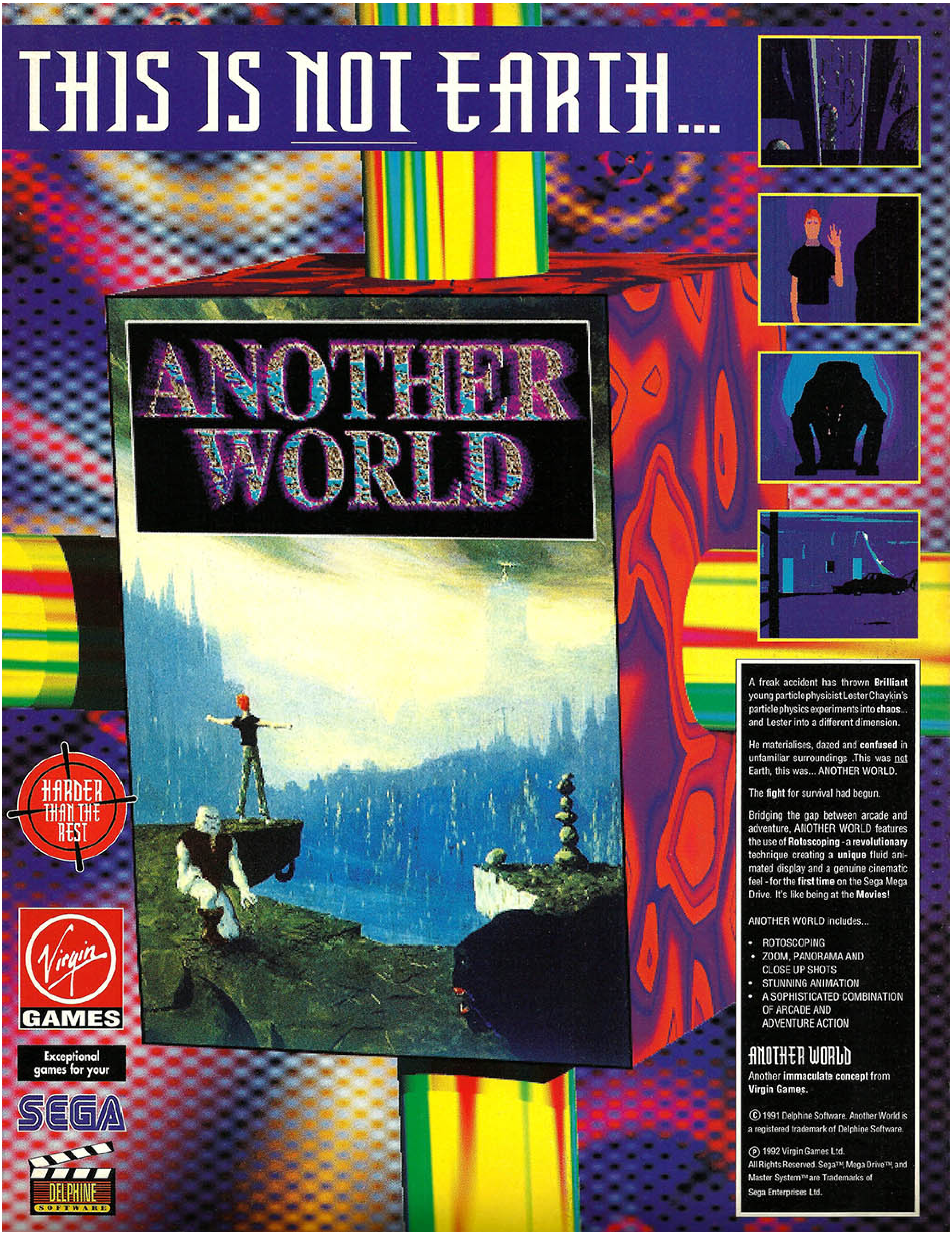
THIS IS NOT EARTH...
ANOTHER WORLD
HARDER THAN THE REST
Virgin GAMES
Exceptional games for your
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DELPHINE SOFTWARE

A freak accident has thrown **Brilliant** young particle physicist Lester Chaykin's particle physics experiments into **chaos**... and Lester into a different dimension.

He materialises, dazed and **confused** in unfamiliar surroundings .This was not Earth, this was... ANOTHER WORLD.

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Bridging the gap between arcade and adventure, ANOTHER WORLD features the use of **Rotoscoping** - a **revolutionary** technique creating a **unique** fluid animated display and a genuine cinematic feel - for the **first time** on the Sega Mega Drive. It's like being at the **Movies**!

ANOTHER WORLD includes...

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- ZOOM, PANORAMA AND CLOSE UP SHOTS
- STUNNING ANIMATION
- A SOPHISTICATED COMBINATION OF ARCADE AND ADVENTURE ACTION

ANOTHER WORLD

Another **immaculate concept** from **Virgin Games.**

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MEGA would also like to thank: JVC, Gamesville, Michael Hutchence, Squiffy's, all the girls we've loved before, who wandered in and out our door, we're glad they came along, we dedicate this song, to all the girls we've loved before, er, that's it

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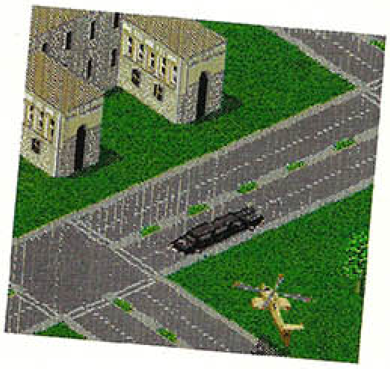
Hot news from Sega USA • 28 pages of

It's been a busy month, with Neil nipping over to America. And just look at all the stuff we've got for you

6 MEGA CITY

Our regular news section is absolutely bulging this month. Not only do we have the usual selection of snippety bits, we also have a special report from the CES show in Las Vegas and that means all the hottest news on the Mega Drive and Mega CD.



Neil takes a look at *Jungle Strike*, the sequel to *Desert Strike*

12 THE CHARTS

Once again we contact the chart people, get all the info required and spend hours typing in the bleeding positions, all while being amusing and juggling three small tortoises. Oh yes, that hip-hop-happening, jive-assed page, The Charts, is awaiting your attention.

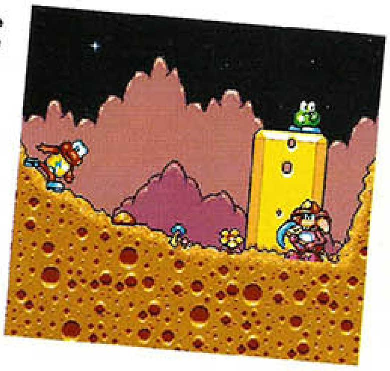
Vizzer blows the gaff on the great sexism debate

14 DOES VIOLET BERLIN THINK VIDEO GAMES ARE SEXIST OR WHAT?

The blonde bombshell from ITV's Bad Influence! has a good old chat with Neil West about the apparent lack of femininity in Sega Mega Drive games. Are they sexist? Should things be different? Does anybody really give a toss about the whole situation? Find out by turning to page 14.

16 BUILDING THE PERFECT GAME

We wanted to tell all our readers about how Mega Drive games actually come about, right from the concept through to the finished product. Gary Penn (famed computer games expert) takes us through the early stages of a game's development in this, the first part of a five-part feature.



We show you how the experts create characters like Jim Pond

20 1992 READER AWARDS

Who was best in '92?

21 £2,000 OF EA CARTS TO BE WON!

EA come over all generous and cough.

Conrad gets wazzed and loses his memory in *Flashback*

22 PREVIEWS

The games of the future, no less, plus your complete guide to 1993's planned releases.

60 TIPS

Paul Mellerick digs deep into his sack (his mail sack that is) to bring you the biggest and best tips section this side of Bath. And what's more, they're all guaranteed to work (er, probably).

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DISCOVER THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

The most hilarious adventure ever written is reviewed on page 30. Yo-ho-ho, shiver me timbers and so on...

64 THE TIPS LIST

If you've ever needed a tip and thought "Blast, which issue did I see that in?", you'll see the value of our tips list. There are hundreds of tips, hints and cheats in one massive wadge, so you need never be without a handy hint again.

68 ARENA

This is the bizarre bit of the tips section, which tells you things about your games which you would never have dreamt possible. Find out new ways of playing those tired old cartridges with Mega Drive maestro Paul Mellerick.

69 RIP 'N' TIP

This month we give you some stonking cut out and keep guides to *Rolo To The Rescue* and *Terminator 2*. And remember, you don't *have* to rip these tips out if you don't want to. They'll still work if you leave them in the mag. No, really, they will!

70 TOP 100

We show you what we think are the hundred best Mega Drive titles ever. They range from the utterly brilliant to the worth a look, and what's more, you'll probably totally disagree. Still, we don't care, life's a bummer like that.

86 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Don't forget, the cover price of MEGA is going up next month so if you want 14 issues for the price of 12 (at the existing price), turn to page 86 and subscribe now.

88 BECOME A MEGA DRIVE EXPERT

Not everyone knows the ins and outs of the Mega Drive and all things connected with it, especially if you've only recently got into video gaming. In a special four-page feature, we explain practically everything there is to know about the Mega Drive, games, Mega CDs, imports...

90 PURCHASE

The weather's been pretty cack of late, so don't toddle down the shops in the rain to get that handy cartridge bag you so desperately need. Order some booty from our mail order page instead. Then pop your order in an envelope and walk down to the post box in the rain... oh dear.

93 WIN A CART A WEEK FOR A YEAR

In this spectacular compo (organised in conjunction with the lovely Liz from Gamesville) you could win a Mega Drive game every week for a year. Wowzer!

Become a Mega Drive expert – read our beginner's guide starting on page 88

94 MEGA MOUTH

Neil West ploughs through a mountain of readers' letters, answers them to the best of his ability, realises the best of his ability is not really much cop, then decides to delegate the job to someone else. Git!

98 SHUTDOWN

Let's face it, even Madame Rosa the fortune teller can''t really see the future, so how are we meant to do it? No, just like that famous Romany soothsayer, we merely look at the facts and speculate on dozens of possibilities. And inevitably, a fairly high percentage of our predictions will come to pass.

MEGA CITY

Six pages chocka with news • reviews

MEGA

SIX OF THE BEST

Las Vegas, venue of the CES show in January

Sssh! If you look *very* closely, you can just see Neil "sad git" West up way past his bedtime losing all his money on a blackjack table

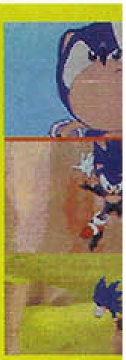
Welcome to issue six of MEGA, thanks for reading. The hottest news this month comes from a huge video-game show held in America. The Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in January saw the unveiling and announcements of loads of new Mega Drive games and add-ons, so check out the news pages for details

The hottest news of all came from Tom Kalinske, the Sega USA boss himself. In a remarkably frank and open interview, he told MEGA (the only UK games mag granted an audience) all about his plans for 1993: Virtual Reality add-ons, Laser Disc Drives, light-activated games controllers, a 64-bit CD-based successor to the Mega Drive, *Sonic 3* ("it looks like something from Disney") and more Mega CD games than you could wave a Menacer at. The Mega Drive looks set for a vintage year.

We review 14 brand new Mega Drive games and take a look at the best Mega CD game so far – the hysterical graphical adventure, *The Secret Of Monkey Island.*

Then, of course, there are all the previews, interviews, tips, features and TWO competitions, both of which offer you the chance to win £2,000 worth of Mega Drive games. So enjoy the mag, take in what the main man Kalinske has to say, and look forward to issue seven – we've got something very special lined up for you.

® *Neil, Andy, Paul and Amanda*

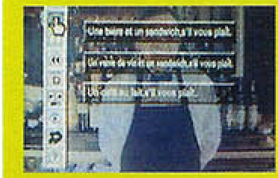


***Sonic 3* is six months into development, and *Sonic* on CD already looks like "real animation; like something from Disney"**

***Make Your Own Music Videos* on the Mega CD from C&C Music Factory, Kriss Kross and Marky Mark brings all the glamour of the pop world to the Sega scene, offering gamers the chance to cut and mix their own music videos**

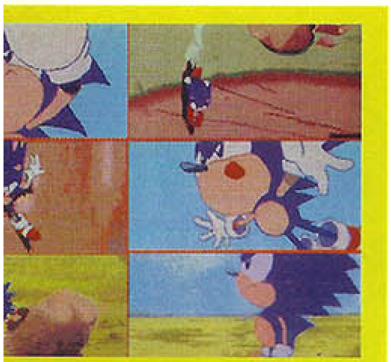
***Sewer Shark* (right and below) is spearheading the Mega CD's push to get real video footage into games...**

Where are you from?



Laser Disc technology from Sega and Panasonic combine to offer Sega gamers the ultimate in graphics. Coming soon...

Virtual Reality on your Mega Drive? Sega are making it happen in '93. A full colour, 3D VR add-on unit will be out for Christmas...



SEGA USA'S BOSS SPILLS THE BEANS

Check this out: a Virtual Reality add-on for your Mega Drive, a Laser Disc Drive and an infra-red body movement detector game controller. They're all on the way in 1993, according to Sega USA's boss, Tom Kalinske...

The scrum around the entrance to Sega's inner sanctum at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas seemed impenetrable.

The world, his wife, his 2.4 kids, his dog and the bloke he plays darts with down the pub on Tuesdays all wanted to talk to Sega's top boss about the company's plans for 1993.

A humble journo from Blighty would appear to have stood no chance. Then the word began to filter through the minions, up past the legions of vice presidents, round the protective PAs, from big knob to big knob and up to the very, very top, to the, erm, biggest knob of them all (ahem), Sega's president Tom Kalinske: "MEGA is here!"

Immediately, the man himself appeared at the entrance to the private quarters and waved us through. The crowds parted and we were in...

Tom Kalinske is something of a hero at Sega. He joined the firm when Nintendo was the undisputed King of America and promptly smashed the competition back into second place, simultaneously making Sega the most important company in the world console market. He is indeed a clever man.

So what does the man with the formidable reputation have planned for '93? Well, firstly he revealed that Sega had started to work on (surprise, surprise) *Sonic 3* on cartridge.

"We actually began work back in September, before *Sonic 2* had hit the streets. There have been a huge amount of meetings about what to do with him next and what we've decided is that we need more peripheral characters like Tails. In *Sonic 3*, Sonic's going to have a lot more friends and a lot more enemies."

As for the top-secret Mega CD *Super Sonic*, Kalinske admits that the main hog won't hit CD until the end of the year.

"That's because we've got to get this right. We have to make the CD version so much better than what's gone before and that's some challenge.

"I've seen the stuff that's been done so far, and to me it looks like real animation; like something from Disney. It's also much longer and better looking."

We can't wait. But in the meanwhile, it's worth noting that Sonic's actually got his own TV show. Sega have done a deal with ABC television in America and the Sonic cartoon will be previewed in March with a series scheduled for late summer.

> **"Our new Virtual Reality add-on is already blowing people's minds"**

One new category of software which is emerging with the CD drive is Virtual VCR. There are currently two available titles: Prince – featuring concert footage and videos from the diminutive genius; and March Of Time – a disc containing newsreel footage shot by Time magazine and narrated by the great big fat (although, quite frankly, dead) genius Orson Welles.

In truth, the quality isn't really close to that of a VHS video – the picture unfortunately remains a bit grainy and the action a tad jumpy. The Make Your Own Music Video series from Marky Mark, C&C Music Factory, INXS and self-confessed Sega nuts Kriss Kross suffer similarly, but are fun nonetheless.

But most exciting news of all is that of Sega's brand new peripherals.

The Activator uses infra-red beams to track body movements and transfer the information to your Mega Drive so that if you punch, kick, or swing around a baseball bat, the movements are recreated on screen – well that's the theory anyway. The Activator comes with two compatible games and it also works with *Streets Of Rage 2*. Looks good fun, but it's sure to be alarmingly knackering.

The second new peripheral is so new it wasn't even on show. Kalinske described it as "a sort of big pair of snazzy sunglasses" that takes the Mega Drive into the wonderful world of Virtual Reality.

Sega has already used VR technology in the arcades with games like *Virtua Racing*. Unfortunately, the unit won't be ready until the very end of the year and it could well cost as much as £200, but the results – full colour 3D is the promise – could be fantastic, especially if the four proposed games (flying, shooting, driving and fantasy action titles) are up to scratch.

Tom Kalinske, Sega USA's boss, is indeed a fantastically big cheese

Kalinske boasted: "Even at this early stage it's blowing people's minds. It's full colour and it really does let you right inside the games."

And as if that wasn't enough to keep Mega Drive owners happy for another year, there's news of the Laser Disc Drive for the Mega Drive coming from Panasonic (check out the photo on page 9), which looks set to break yet more ground in game animation.

A Laser Disc Drive can store even more information than a CD – it's especially useful for storing video footage. The implications of its introduction to the world of video gaming are fantastic.

So that's the technology of tomorrow, but what about the day after that? Kalinske already has plans for 1994. He has spoken about a 32-bit Giga Drive, that will take Sega to "a new level of quality in gaming". In Vegas, he was careful to stress that he thought "we should start talking about a 32-bit *plus* machine...". Wow.

But apart from that cryptic hint, he's not giving away too much just yet – except he's reassuring us that any new Sega machine will run Mega Drive carts or CDs.

The *real* interesting thing is what else this new machine will play. Some mouth-watering new CD format is obviously pretty far down the development line at Sega, but there's no doubt that the firm's staying one step ahead of the competition.

More news over the page...

MEGA CITY

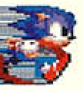
EA gets its chopper out...

...of retirement for the sequel to *Desert Strike*. *Jungle Strike* is the name of the game, and it promises to offer more of the same hover-dodge-murder action that's proved to be so popular. Whether or not EA plans to cunningly start a war in some jungly corner of the world to promote the game (*Desert Strike* in no way benefited from the Gulf War, oh no no no...) we'll have to wait and see. Out in June, priced £39.99, *Jungle Strike* looks set to be a winner – stand by Kate Adie.

Sony grabs *Dracula!*

Psygnosis's Mega CD version of Bram Stoker's Dracula film is to be published by Sony – they liked what they saw so much that they snapped up the game before it was finished.

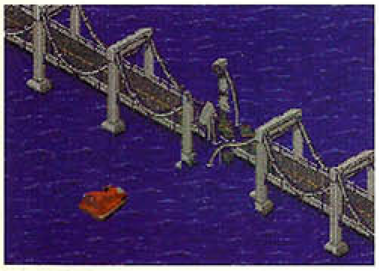
TURBO-CHARGED SEGA GAMES



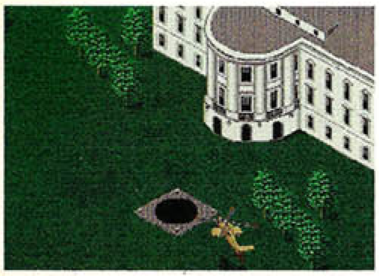
BPM is what DJs call Beats Per Minute, but Sega's programmers call Blast Processing Mode. BPM is a programming tool which Sega claim is "like kicking the system into turbo charge". BPM is used to give a game character a sudden burst of speed – such as the spin-dash move in *Sonic 2*.

A hastily-acquired MEGA technical correspondent writes: "Eh? What? Hang on, I only came in to clean the windo... ah. Erm, yes, well what's going on here is that they're momentarily 'turning off' some of the background movement, enabling the sprite movement to benefit from a full whack of processing power. The speed of the movement is still restricted to TV screen update though, and it will always be a compromise with animation fluidity. Erm, can I go now?"

Yes. Thanks. Expect BPM to be featured in more Mega Drive titles in the future.



***Jungle Strike* sometimes places you in a speedboat. Try to jump the bridge**



Back in your trusty chopper in time for a quick buzz over the Whitehouse to scare the president

Virtual Reality on your Mega Drive

NASA astronauts are trained using it, and soon you'll be able to play with it. A spin-off from Sega's development of the smash-hit, 32-bit coin-op *Virtua Racing* (check out your local arcade for details) is a VR helmet for use with your Mega Drive.

Plugging into the back of your Mega Drive and worn like a crash helmet, "it delivers a feeling of total immersion into a completely realistic 360-degree, full-colour gaming world by utilising three-dimensional, stereo-optic vision and depth perception," claim Sega. They're planning to produce four games: one driving, one flying, one shooting and one "fantasy action".

Although the piece of kit will probably cost in the region of £150 (including one free game) and won't be available until Christmas, this could well be the first add-on to bring VR to the home. Exciting stuff.

Can Sega really bring Virtual Reality to the home?

MINI CONSOLES AT 30,000 FEET

Following the announcement that Britannia Airlines are soon to be issuing Game Gears to all passengers to help wile away those boring flights, Sega have announced that a joint project with Japanese giant Matsushita will soon result in mini Mega Drives being available for any other airlines which might like to take customer comfort to this extreme.

Mounted in the back of the seat in front (think about it) these mini consoles will play a whole range of Mega Drive favourites, though whether playing *Afterburner 2* on an aircraft is the most relaxing or therapeutic of occupations remains to be seen.

DO YOU LIKE WAR?

Then you may be pleased to hear that *Breach* is coming to your Mega Drive. A tried and trusted RPG/adventure/strategy war game, *Breach* features 18 wartime scenarios – enough to keep Saddam Hussein busy for a few afternoons.

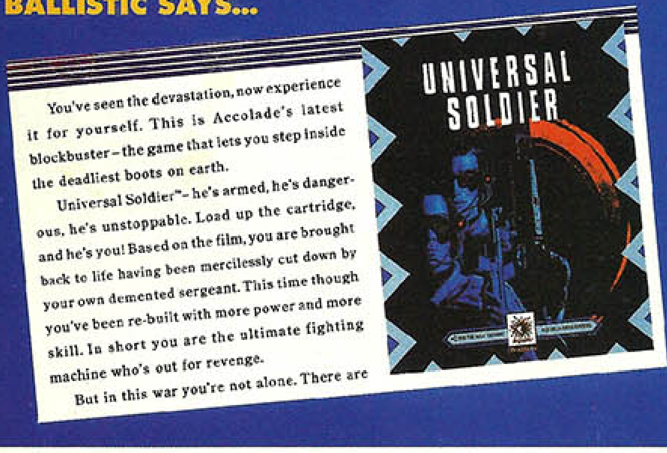
Blame Norman Lamont!

You get what you pay for, right? Right. Pay in peanuts, get monkeys, right? Right. So just think how much better MEGA will undoubtedly be when it rises fractionally in price to £2.25 next month. Erm... sorry, market forces and all that. But don't you worry, we've got something special lined up for you as compensation. Yes, there'll be a fab poster cover-mounted on issue seven of MEGA, so don't miss it.

MEGA
DESERT ISLAND DISC
GOT A MEGA DRIVE?
SONIC 2 LEVEL SELECT!

BULL DURHAM'S INCREDIBLE WORLD OF PR AND ADVERTISING

BALLISTIC SAYS...



You've seen the devastation, now experience it for yourself. This is Accolade's latest blockbuster – the game that lets you step inside the deadliest boots on earth.

Universal Soldier™ – he's armed, he's dangerous, he's unstoppable. Load up the cartridge, and he's you! Based on the film, you are brought back to life having been mercilessly cut down by your own demented sergeant. This time though you've been re-built with more power and more skill. In short you are the ultimate fighting machine who's out for revenge.

But in this war you're not alone. There are

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

Bull "bull" Durham

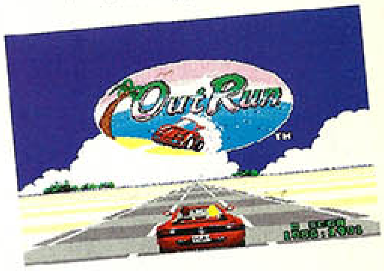
MEGA SAYS...

Oil and water, chalk and cheese, Universal Soldier (the film) and *Universal Soldier* (the game). Yes indeed, these two things are about as close as Land's End is to John O Groats. The game is based on the film in much the same way as My Fair Lady was based on the Vietnam War. Sorry chaps, but *Universal Soldier* on the Mega Drive was none other than *Turrican 2* in a different guise. You've been rumbled.

Don't miss out on still more advertising and PR bull in next month's issue of MEGA!

OUTRUN 2019

Outrun was a fabulous coin-op, but a fairly lousy cart – too much attention was paid to trying to recreate the graphical feel at the cost of the gameplay. But some games simply refuse to die, and so *Outrun 2019* is on its way to give us an idea of what the motorways will be like in 26 years time. Don't expect great things.



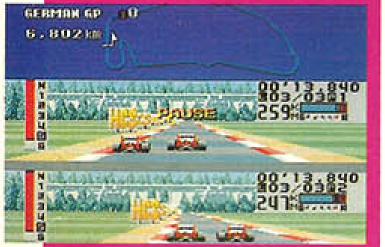
"Of *course* you'll be home by ten"

CHI CHI PRO CHALLENGE GOLF

Virgin Games (hotly rumoured to be working on a Mega CD version of the jaw-droppingly gorgeous golf game *Links*) will soon be revealing a new golf game for the Mega Drive.

SPEEDWAY PRO CHALLENGE

A two-player, Formula One-style race-'em-up is due for release from Rennovation. It didn't look that impressive when Neil had a bash at the CES, but then he's a hard-to-please old git sometimes. Looks suspiciously like Flying Edge's *Ferrari Grand Prix* too...



Two-player racing gets another outing, courtesy of Rennovation

The world's biggest arcade? Sega are opening a 23,000-square foot video game theme park (concentrating heavily on VR) in Bournemouth this May. Great news, but small potatoes when compared to the fifty $20-million theme parks planned for Japan. Lucky Japanese folk

Sega goes Pioneering for laser discs...

Remember *Firefox*, *Dragon's Lair?* Coin-ops using laser disc technology were once the big (but crap of course) arcade thang. Anyway, fact is that Sega have struck a deal with Pioneer allowing them to build a laser disc-equipped Mega Drive. This is in no way intended to replace the Mega CD, but is more a sideways move in Sega's long-term development plan.

Laser discs are like CDs, except they're usually bigger and more expensive to produce. The advantage of them, of course, is that they can hold even more detailed information than a CD, hence they're commonly used to hold masses of visual information. When used for games, the usual result is fantastic graphics – either genuine video footage or clever animation – but the gameplay itself is severely limited. It merely demands that the player makes the occasional decision to access a further animated or visual sequence. There's no news of when the "Mega LD" will appear and how much it will cost, but we'll keep you posted.

Sonic 2 tips

Yes, we've found the level select using the Action Replay (see MEGA PLAY), but we've also found the real level select code as well as a Super Sonic cheat.

Firstly, the level select. Go to the options menu and play the following tunes on the Sound Test. Play 19, 65, 09 and 17 in that order. When you play 17, you'll hear a ping. Press Start to go back to the title screen and then hold down button A and press Start to enter the level select.

Secondly, the Super Sonic cheat. Enter the level select as above and on the Sound Test option play 04, 01, 02 and 06. Now select your level and play as normal. When Sonic has collected 50 rings, press B and C together and watch him turn into Super Sonic.

Also, when the level-select cheat has worked, you can play the game in slow mo by pausing the game and holding button B. Button C will make Sonic jump and button A will reset the game.

STRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR-IKE!

***Championship Bowling* brings all the blood-pumping, heart-pounding, adrenaline-pumping, edge-of-your-seat-sitting tension that is tenpin bowling to your Mega Drive. Up to four players can compete in what could well turn out to be *Zany Golf's* only rival in the "Most Ridiculous Concept For A Video Game" awards.**

MEGA CD UPDATE

Just released on import is the first (maybe the last, we don't know) compilation for the Mega CD. It comprises four very good games: *Revenge of Shinobi*, *Columns*, *Golden Axe* and *Streets of Rage*. They are the same as the normal cart versions except that the music is played from the CD. There's also a nice bit of messing about with the Sega logo.

The CD costs the same price as a normal import CD (around £40) and rumour has it that this CD will be given away FREE with the English Mega CD. We think it's a great idea, but the games are a bit old (all of them except *Columns* have sequels). For a copy of the CD give Krazy Konsoles a ring on 0422 342901.

Step into the red light zone!

One spin-off of the current Virtual Reality boom is the idea of waving your arms and legs in the air to co-ordinate on-screen action. So (ever attentive to gameplaying trends) Sega will soon be presenting gamesplayers with... The Activator.

The Activator is an octagonal clip-together framework of infra-red transmitters and receivers. Standing in the middle of the octagon, the player breaks any of eight light beams to trigger a movement on screen. So when suitably calibrated, a kick or punch in a certain direction will result in your game character kicking or punching appropriately – fun for games such as *Streets Of Rage 2*, as much use as a luminous lettuce for *Sonic 2*.

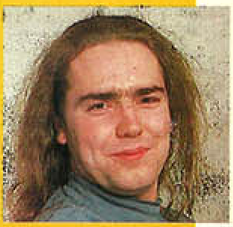
Quite how it's meant to enhance gameplay is beyond us. Certainly, the members of Sega USA's lower ranks who floundered hopelessly around on stage at the Activator's launch in the USA were having a tough time of it. Kicking, punching, headbutting and even "assuming the raised arms, one-legged stance made famous in the Karate Kid" (as recommended in Sega's manual!) all seemed to result in a crouch.

Strange. But hey, let's not get too pessimistic about it until we've tried it. Priced at around $80 (£55) in the USA, British gamers can expect to get their hands on The Activator (complete with two free games) sometime in the autumn

BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

OK, so you enjoy playing Sega games, but imagine if it was your job. There are plenty of lucky people who get to work in the video game industry and this month we take a look at perhaps the most important job of all...

NO. 6: GAME DESIGNER



NAME: Jon Hare
AGE: 27
JOB DESCRIPTION: Graphics and game design, and a business partner in the programming team.
RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS: Nine 'O' levels (one in art), and I dropped out of school after 'A' levels – most people in the industry are drop-outs.
ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: I've been interested in game design since I was five or six years old. I like to think that at an early age I grasped that a game has its own laws and rules (unlike life). Once you stop to understand that you have complete control over what you do, you can really start to make the game as good as possible. More specifically, I now have eight years experience in the industry, as both a graphic artist and a game designer.
PREVIOUS JOBS: Worked part-time at Asda for two years in the Warehouse, but I had to get out after I tried it full-time. Then I was unemployed and skipped around until...
FIRST BREAK: ... a company called LT Software in Basildon (who were a games programming house) gave my mate a job because he'd knocked up a demo of Snoopy flying around on his kennel. Later, he was having trouble designing a game he was working on, and I happened to be round at his house at the time. I helped him out, the company liked what I did, and they gave me a job. After a while we broke out on our own.
GOOD THINGS ABOUT JOB: My job is very varied. I can be creative, I have control over what the business is doing, and there's a lot of satisfaction when the games are good and when we get positive feedback from magazines and gamesplayers. I'm my own boss.
BAD THINGS ABOUT JOB: Learning how to manage people – it's all a matter of learning how to be firm but fair. It's also tough to keep working when you have to finish something, but no one's there to tell you to keep at it. On the other hand, it's always tough knowing when something is actually finished – you can keep trying to perfect something forever. It's tough when the publishers get all the credit for games which the programmer has done all the work for.

NEXT MONTH!

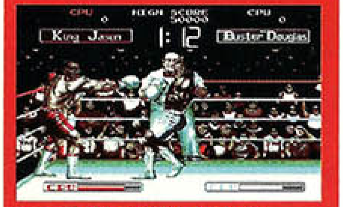
Another rundown on the life of some lucky geezer or geezette who gets to work with in the video game industry for a living.

VOYAGE TO THE BOWELS OF THE BACK CATALOGUE

The sinking of the Titanic, the bombing of Pearl Harbour, the burying of Pompeii, the great flood. All these have been disasters on a truly massive scale, but all pale into insignificance next to the biggest disaster of them all, the release of...

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS KNOCKOUT BOXING

How we laughed when, in real life, Busty babes had to fight Mike Tyson. How we cheered when Belly Boy Buster fluked a victory. How we sobbed when ol' fatso appeared in one of the most dire arrangements of chips ever to sit together in a cartridge and claim to be a game.



Barrel-shaped buffoonery in *james "Buster" Douglas Boxing*

"But hey guys," we hear you cry "those graphics look kinda groovy!" Er, nope. The fighters are big, but set them into motion, and everything suddenly becomes rather amusing. You can count the frames of animation contained therein on the fingers of one foot. What moves do exist are so poorly implemented that you never really feel you're making contact with anything other than thin air. And what's worse, when you do eventually knock your opponents out, they do not, as you would probably expect, come crashing onto the canvas, but instead curl up in a little ball as if they had suddenly come over a bit tired and therefore decided to take forty winks.

I could reel off the rest of the problems which arise in this FARCE, but it would use up approximately 0.002 calories of energy and quite frankly, they'd be woefully misspent. Instead, I choose to belch in this cartridge's general direction before casting it into the air from the office window. We're three floors up and the cart would most assuredly be trashed. Amen!

NEXT MONTH!

We'll slag off yet another Mega Drive game in this column next month. Not because we are evil folk, of course, but because we owe it to you, our beloved readers, to keep you as far away as possible from some of the god-awful games which have blessed our shores over the last couple of years.

Are you ready for DPA?

Dynamic Play Adjustment (DPA) is a new process which is being included in several new Sega games to provide players of different skill with a challenge suited to their specific abilities. Novice players will find the going easier, whereas hardened vets will encounter more obstacles and bad guys

The first Sega game to feature DPA is *Ecco*. Smart eh? But before you start thinking just how smart those Sega guys really are, you may remember that Mindscape's platformer *Gods* (a game turned down by Sega Europe when presented to them for development) featured a very similar "difficulty tuning" system. Bizarre...

Ecco's smiling after a shot of DPA

MEGA DRIVE MODEM UNVEILED

Sega Japan have had a Mega Drive modem bubbling under for years, but now a company in the USA have developed their own link and plan to bring it to the UK. A modem is a device that connects your console to a telephone line, enabling you to "speak" to any other similarly equipped Mega Drive in the world.

Costing just $90 (around £60) the modem comes complete with one game and will enable you to play two-player games down the phone line. The game is OK, but not brilliant – the one drawback to the scheme being that the modem is not compatible with any of Sega's existing games, so only specialist software will work. But Teleplay Systems are offering games developers free access to their technology and are confident that many new games will be modem-compatible.

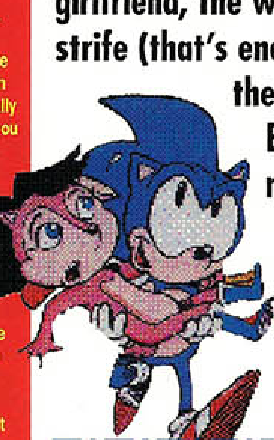
The cost in phone bills for a prolonged game could be huge, but with the imminent fall in phone charges, this could be the start of a whole new craze of long-distance gaming.

RACE DRIVIN' ARRIVIN'

Remember *Hard Drivin'*, the almost accurate car driving game? Well now the long-awaited sequel, *Race Drivin'*, looks set for a Mega Drive release in the summer. More 3D racing action, scarier stunts (there's even a corkscrew loop) and faster cars await the intrepid stunt driver in this offering from Tengen.

INSTANT REPLAY

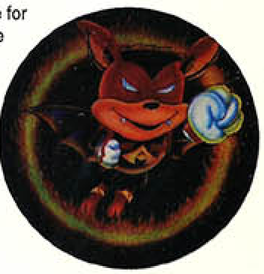
Revealed! Sonic's girlfriend! So here she is; the girlfriend, the woman in doors, the trouble and strife (that's enough sexist pseudonyms – Neil) to the one and only Sonic The Hedgehog. Each to their own I suppose, but it must be said that when you look at what Roger Rabbit managed to come up with, it looks like Sonic's on to a bit of a loser...



Introducing... *Aero The Acrobat*

OK, Sunsoft are describing their new, up 'n' coming Mega Drive game character as "tough, cool, slightly bad, almost invincible – but loveable underneath". Well that really tells us a lot, doesn't it? Ever since Sonic made such an impression with his "cool and cuddly" persona, games publishers have been desperately trying to recreate his stylish appeal for themselves.

Still, we digress. The fact remains that, cool or not, *Aero The Acrobat* will be a platform/*Sonic*-style adventure in which our cuddly(?) bat hero attempts to save his circus from the baddies. Due for release in the summer.



***Aero The Acrobat* (not to be confused with The Chocolate Bar)**

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB TAKES TO THE FIELD...

16-bit, quarterback-view explosive American football action is what Flying Edge promise from their offering to the competitive world of Mega Drive American football games. Whether the game, which is endorsed by ten of the top NFL quarterbacks (including John Elway and Jim Kelly), is up to *John Madden '93* standards, we'll have to wait and see.

GENESIS
THE FLINTSTONES
SEGA
TAITO

YABBA DABBA DOOOOOO!

The Flintstones, soon to be released in the USA from Taito, promises six stages of Bedrock action including a foot-powered car race, pterodactyl flying and "unbelievable underwater levels". Thelma Flintstone in a swimsuit – now there's a thought...

The modern Stone Age family step out of history onto your Mega Drive

Acclaim's World Cup Soccer

The 1994 World Cup is being held in the USA. Hence, all the USA game companies are desperately trying to get themselves a decent footy game with which to cash in on the inevitable boom in soccer popularity that the World Cup will bring to America. Games which are currently in production include *Sensible Soccer*, *Goal*, *Striker*, an anonymous one from EA Sports and now this. It's enough to make Jimmy Hill's beard stand on end.

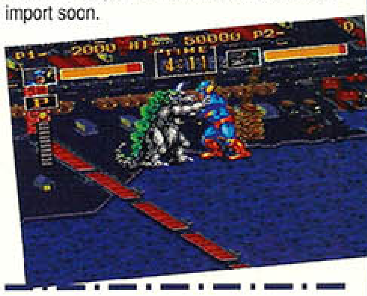
FATAL FURY BREWING IN USA

***Fatal Fury* (another *Streetfighter 2* clone) on the Mega Drive places three different fighters at your disposal in a bid to battle through nine opponents to become the, erm, hardest dude in town. Coming soon...**

Toys, the game of the film, is due for Mega Drive release in the summer. The film, starring Robin Williams and directed by Barry Levinson, we know nothing about. Regarding the game, we know even less. But we'd put money on the fact that it will have toys in it!

King Of The Monsters

Giant monsters fight it out on the city streets – only one will survive. Will it be yours? A popular Nintendo game now making the switch to Mega Drive should be available on import soon.



ON THE EDGE...

FLYING EDGE PROUDLY PRESENT (SOMETIME IN 1993) THIS LITTLE LOT...

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

This is another basketball game, but this time it offers a different graphical perspective (as if you're on the court, wow!). And that, dear readers, is all we know about Flying Edge's *NBA All-Star Challenge*, but no doubt more news will be along soon...

ROGER CLEMENS' MVP BASEBALL

Quite who Roger Clemens is, and why Flying Edge should bother getting him to endorse their new baseball game, remains a mystery to MEGA. Presumably he's the managing director's cousin, or maybe he actually plays baseball quite well. Who knows? Still, quite frankly, who cares? The fact is that his game's on the way and it should reach these sunny shores in time for the summer.

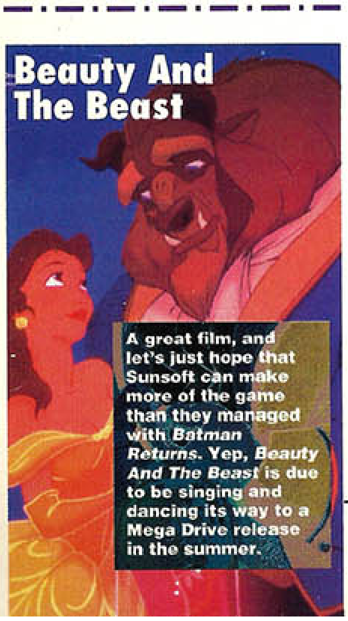
MORTAL KOMBAT

It's official. Last month we heard the rumours, this month we've got the facts. Probe (the software house responsible for *Terminator*, *Terminator 2* and *Alien 3*) are currently working on *Mortal Kombat* for the Mega Drive — to be published by Flying Edge later in the year.

Similar to *Streetfighter 2* in playing style, *Mortal Kombat* is a one-on-one beat-'em-up featuring large, hard-as-concrete fighters. The novelty here is that the coin-op featured digitised images of real people (similar to those in *Pitfighter*) and this added an extra dimension of blood 'n' guts to the kick-punch-bleed game experience.

HIT THE ICE

This is the name of a new ice hockey game which is due out from Taito. Quite how it will compete with *NHLPA Hockey* or indeed Sega's own *Mario Lemieux Hockey* remains to be seen, but let's not start pooping on their parade before we've actually played it. We're nice like that.



Beauty And The Beast

A great film, and let's just hope that Sunsoft can make more of the game than they managed with *Batman Returns*. Yep, *Beauty And The Beast* is due to be singing and dancing its way to a Mega Drive release in the summer.

Make your own movies!

His royal groovesomeness struts on Mega CD

Saving for a Mega CD? Then you'll be pleased to hear that Sega are planning yet more uses for their disc-spinning piece of kit (Got nothing to do with the fact that there are no decent games of course – Neil's evil twin brother). Ahem, no.

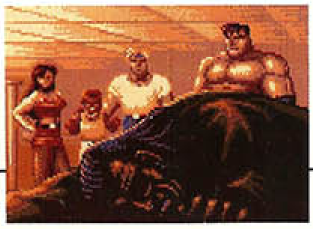
Virtual VCR is the name of the game, and selecting bits and pieces of music and film footage from CDs and then clipping them together to make your own short films or videos is the game. Priced at only $29 (£22) each, titles will soon be available from Prince, U2, Peter Gabriel as well as more serious, documentary-style offerings. The picture quality isn't great, but there's plenty of potential for greater things in the future.

STREETS OF RAGE 2

After our decision to not rate *Streets of Rage 2* until we'd played it enough, we couldn't wait to get our hands on the official release. Unfortunately, we were to be fairly disappointed.

As we said in the review, *Streets of Rage 2* is a great looking, great sounding, fun and playable game, but we suggested that it might be slightly too easy. Well, we were right. *Streets of Rage 2 is* too easy. The game is a complete walk over, the only challenging bits being the bosses, and once you've figured out their mode of attack, they're history.

The game is very playable, but unless *Streets of Rage 2* is played on the hardest difficulty setting, you'll bash straight through it. This is a shame, because what there is is fantastic – this is one of the most polished and playable games Sega have ever made, but overall, it scores just 81%.



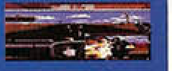
Great game, shame about the challenge

THE QS IN THE NEWS!

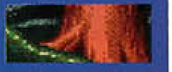
Here we go again with the quiz column that's rapidly gaining itself the reputation of being the Krypton Factor of the Sega world (without the obstacle course bit, or the fiddly putting shapes into holes bit, of course – that would be silly). It doesn't have Gordon Burns either. Aside from this, the two beats are practically identical. The answers are on page 98 – right off we go...

1. What's the name of Sega USA's boss?
2. How much cash did Sega Europe blow on advertising last year?
a) £2 million
b) £7 million
c) £12 million
3. According to Sega's own information, how old is Miles "Tails" Prower (co-star of *Sonic 2*) meant to be?
a) Four years old
b) Eight years old
c) 16 years old
4. In *Rolo To The Rescue*, which is the odd animal out?
Squirrel, rabbit, beaver, gnu, mole
5. In January there was a huge video game show in America. In which city was it held?
6. Which of these games is not being re-written for a Mega CD release?
Chuck Rock, *Terminator*, *Batman Returns*, *Spiderman*, *Taz-Mania*
7. *Micro Machines* features which sort of vehicles?
8. Name three Mega Drive golf games (not including sequels)
9. Name three Mega Drive American football games (not including sequels)
10. Name three Mega Drive helicopter games (trickier this one)
11. What colour is Violet Berlin's hair?
12. In *NHLPA Hockey*, what do the letters NHLPA stand for?
13. Name three of the wrestlers who appear in *WWF Super Wrestlemania*
14. Where is the GamesMaster TV show supposedly set?
15. James Pond is due to make his third appearance soon in *Project Starfish*. Which software house is responsible for the *James Pond* series of games?

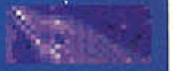
16. From which game is this pooped screenshot taken?



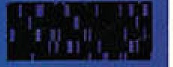
17. From which game is this plopped screenshot taken?



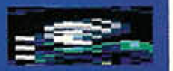
18. From which game is this dollop of a screenshot taken?



19. From which game is this scrunged screenshot taken?



20. From which game is this nobbled screenshot taken?



OK, that's it. The As On The back Page (88).

THE CHARTS

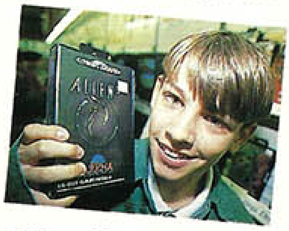
Death is an ugly word. But then again, so is Llanelli. Too many "L"s you see. But enough of such nonsensical tosh, on with this month's charts

OFFICIAL TOP 20

This month		Last month	Game name	MEGA Top 100 position
①	■	(01)	**Sonic 2** The spiky blue speedster sits atop the charts again this month. But then, who'd have thought otherwise?	M 02
②	■	(NE)	**World Of Illusion** Disney characters ahoy! Mizzer and Dozzer go off on a rather easy-to-finish romp. Still, two-player mode is a hoot	M 21
③	■	(NE)	**WWF** Sad shambling berks they may be, but the WWF troop appear in a fairly entertaining pin-'em-down here	M 71
④	■	(NE)	**Terminator 2** This coin-op conversion captures pretty much all the atmosphere of the arcade original. You can use the Menacer on it too	M 30
⑤	▼	(03)	**Desert Strike** EA's Gulf war game is still going strong. Go see the news pages for some info on the follow-up, *Jungle Strike*	M 19
⑥	▼	(04)	**Taz-Mania** That whirling devil of the cartoon world is currently whizzing down the charts. Ah well, he's had a good run	M 24
⑦	■	(NE)	**Wrestle War** Not quite the *WWF*, but if you're into wrestling, you could give it a go. Unfortunately it's rather crap though, so um, don't bother	M --
⑧	▼	(05)	**NHLPA Hockey** Arguably the best game on the Mega Drive. But, of course, people only say arguably when it's probably not true. Still fab though	M 04
⑨	▲	(12)	**Madden '93** Arguably the best game on the Mega Dr... Oh hang on, we've done that haven't we? Another brilliant EA sport simulation	M 01
⑩	■	(NE)	**Spiderman** Spidey swings back into the charts even though he's been around longer than Neil's been out of nappies (about a year)	M 79
⑪	■	(NE)	**Shadow Dancer**	M 44
⑫	■	(NE)	**Lotus Challenge**	M 29
⑬	▼	(08)	**Senna Super Monaco**	M 09
⑭	■	(NE)	**Thunderforce 4**	M 20
⑮	▼	(06)	**Alien 3**	M 89
⑯	▼	(02)	**Euro Club Soccer**	M 100
⑰	▼	(10)	**Super Thunderblade**	M --
⑱	■	(NE)	**Strider**	M --
⑲	■	(NE)	**Dick Tracy**	M --
⑳	▼	(14)	**Alex Kidd Castle**	M --

SOLD!

Charlotte is 35 and comes from Tibet. Oi, who's been messing with my notes?



This could possibly be Desmond. But then, who knows?

This is, um, Frank. Yes that's it, Frank Drebin. He's bought *Chakan*

Which leaves us with, erm, "Fingers" O'Finnigan. (Right, that's it Neil, next time *you* can do the charts page. How can I work under these conditions? – Andy)

Official charts compiled by **Gallup** and ELSPA sponsored by Penguin. Import charts compiled by **Whizz-Kid Games**

IMPORT TOP 20

This month		Last month	Game name	MEGA Top 100 position
①	■	(NE)	**Ecco** *Ecco* topples *Sonic* from the top spot. And quite rightly so. This dolphin caper really is an instant classic. Go and buy it, quick	M --
②	▼	(01)	**Sonic 2** Ha! What's it like to be second to a dolphin eh? But, Sonic's still the Monarch of Segaland in most people's books (spiky git)	M 02
③	■	(NE)	**World Of Illusion** Not, as some of you may think, a Paul Daniels simulator, but a game about Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck	M 21
④	■	(NE)	**Terminator 2** Whip out your Menacer and, er, menace some enemies. This light gun compatible cart is doing rather well in both charts	M 30
⑤	■	(NE)	**Speedball 2** For all-out mindless violence this is unbeatable (unless you compare it to something more mindless and violent that is)	M 37
⑥	■	(NE)	**Tale Spin** Baloo's cartoon adventure doesn't really cut the mustard with the MEGA crew, but it's quite good fun for the kiddies	M --
⑦	▼	(03)	**Madden '93** Fatty Madden has made a right tasty old wad for Electronic Arts, and no doubt we'll be seeing *Madden '94* before long	M 01
⑧	■	(NE)	**Risky Woods** Paul Mellerick reliably informs us that "This is nob!" Thank you for that very lucidly-put piece of criticism Paul	M --
⑨	■	(NE)	**Batman Returns** Oh come on guys. We told you this was utter tosh a couple of issues back and what do you do? Go out and buy it. Pah!	M --
⑩	▲	(17)	**Dragon's Fury** Glad to see this is still here. It's a fabulously playable pinball simulator and no small error. Er, that's all really	M 57
⑪	■	(NE)	**Thunderforce 4**	M 20
⑫	■	(NE)	**Capriati Tennis**	M --
⑬	■	(NE)	**Bio-Hazard Battle**	M 62
⑭	■	(NE)	**Euro Club Soccer**	M 100
⑮	■	(NE)	**Chuck Rock**	M 74
⑯	■	(NE)	**Bart Vs Mutants**	M --
⑰	▼	(11)	**Death Duel**	M --
⑱	■	(NE)	**Leaderboard**	M 59
⑲	▼	(13)	**Joe Montana 3**	M 47
⑳	■	(20)	**PGA Tour Golf**	M 08

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F22	29.99	22.99
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MUSHA	34.99	21.99
NHLPA 93	34.99	24.99
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	NEW	USED
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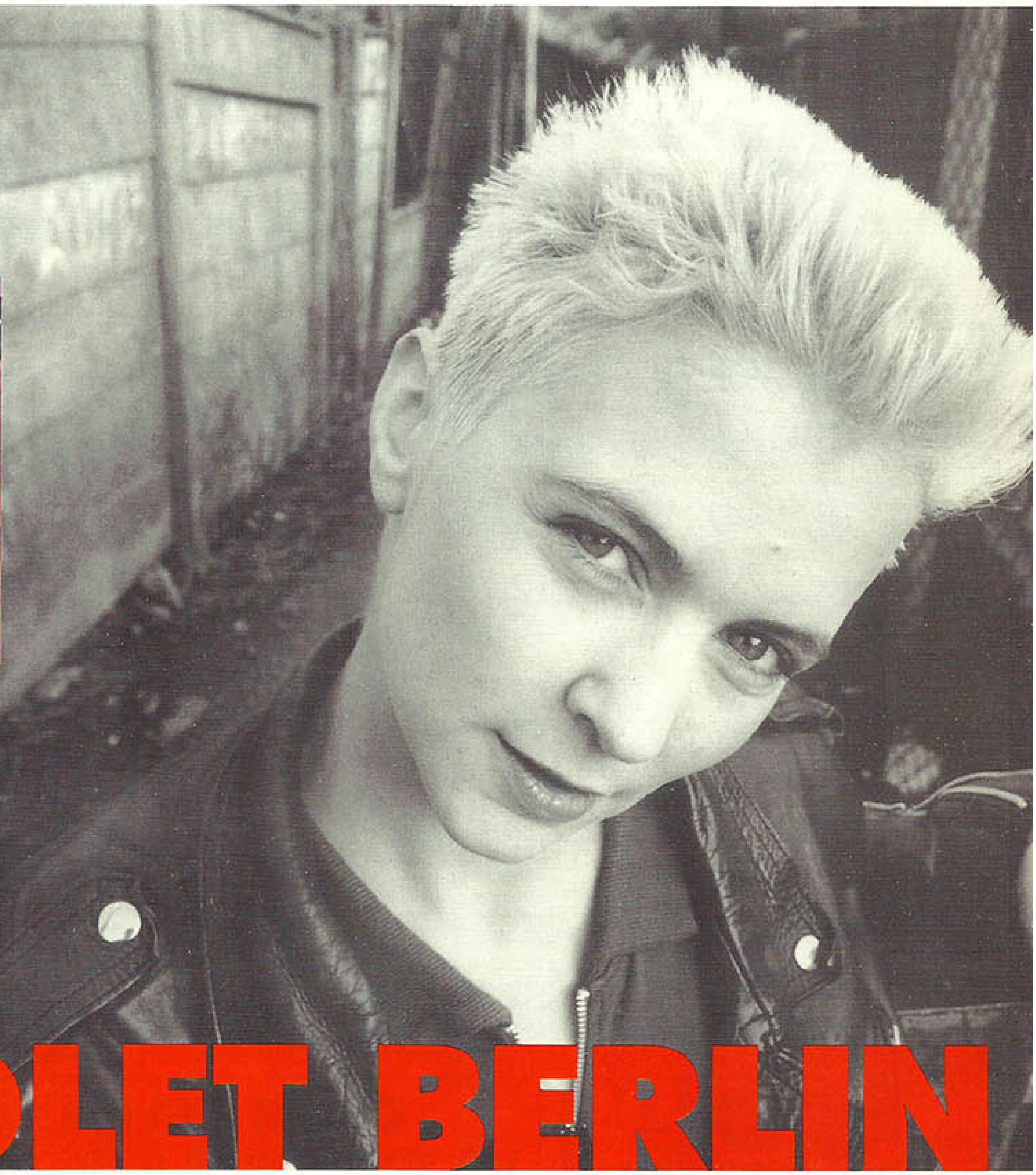
IF YOU DON'T SEE WHAT YOU WANT, JUST CALL !!

Video games are grossly sexist. 99% of game characters are muscle-bound hunks, and when women *are* featured it's usually just an excuse for the programmers to show a teasing flash of pixellated knickers. But does it really matter? Neil West gets all "Nineties' man" and talks to a girlie (pansy – Andy)

Violet does her stuff on the set of Bad Influence! Is she worried that she's just there to attract the boys? "*ME!?* No – don't be silly. If they'd wanted someone like that, then they'd have got some woman with long legs and a big... grin!"



VIOLET BERLIN speaks out for the girls

That was a joke. This "sexist business" is all rubbish right? I mean, even though most games feature blokes, it doesn't mean that there's an underlying subconscious message that women are inferior – it just makes more sense to feature blokes doing blokey things, right? Right.

For example, when you consider that it's the blokes who partake in war and blokes who usually get into fights after a few pints down the local pub, it's only reasonable that it's blokes who should appear in these games. If *Desert Strike* featured a chopper chocked to the rotors with girlies in uniform, then it would probably be regarded as just a tad on the pervy side.

And even if most games do feature blokes, so what? Does that deter girls from playing them?

Hang on. Yes, maybe it does put girls off playing. And maybe, just maybe, if games were occasionally designed with women in mind, then surely games publishers could double their sales – prices could drop and we'd all benefit?

PREDOMINANTLY MALE MARKET

So, Violet Berlin, the UK's most prominent girlie gamer and co-presenter of ITV's Bad Influence!, what d'ya reckon?

"Well, to say that video games are sexist is a bit of a generalisation, but it's obvious that they're squarely aimed at males and don't seem to have much of a female influence. The heroes of the games are usually blokes – it makes a welcome change when you see Blaze out of *Streets of Rage* or Chun Li in *Streetfighter 2*. I can get into these games a lot more."

Don't you think that maybe they've just been put in to make blokes go "FWOOAR!"?

"No, I think they look really good. But then at other times scantily clad women appear in boxing games in between rounds – but it's not just the programmer being sexist, it's a reflection of real life I suppose."

> **"Girls love a good shoot-'em-up or a decent sports game just as much as the boys do"**

So do you think it's fair to say that video games merely mirror boys interests? War, sports, films like Terminator – that's what videogamers are traditionally into, so that's the sort of stuff that gets turned into a video game?

"Yes, they are reflecting real life, or rather what the real life of videogamers *used* to be. But now girls are playing video games as well. It's as if the games designers and programmers haven't realised this yet. If it was just 100% blokes playing video games, then fair enough, but now video games are so mainstream that there are a lot of girls playing. Frankly, I think the software companies are stupid not getting more women involved in the whole process of making games and putting more female characters into games."

So you'd argue that Sega could potentially double their sales by ceasing to ignore half the population and making some games for the female market?

"Yeah, definitely. I really think that."

So how did this situation come about? It's one of those chicken and egg situation thangs – were the first video games designed for boys, so girls never had a look in, or were games designed for blokes when it was realised that it was largely blokes who played them?

Violet contemplates putting her foot in it. Why should 90% of gamesplayers be boys? Are girls not interested – or are they just put off from ever giving it a try?

The first wave of computer games seemed innocent enough: *Space Invaders, Pacman, Asteroids, Galaxians, Donkey Kong* all seem to get a resounding "not guilty!" to any accusations of sexual bias. So how come things changed?

"The roots stem from the fact that boys are encouraged to get involved with science more than girls are, and hence when computers first came along it was the boys who got in there first: largely because they are so much more pushy than girls.

"When *Space Invaders* first came along, I wouldn't have dared to go near a coin-op in a chip shop (which was the only place you could play one), because it was constantly surrounded by 14-year-old, pushy boys. Girls, I think, would be more likely to sit back and let someone else have a go, boys just want to get stuck in there.

"Games makers then concentrated their efforts on making games for boys. And because us girls never got into computers to start off with, it's become a social thing that girls don't really play video games. That's the root of it."

So have things changed now?

"Oh yes, definitely. Girls have really got into them, they're not being put off right from the word go. I only got into video games by accident. A couple of years ago I had to review games for my job and was really surprised when I found out how much fun they were."

So if more girls are playing, but the games are still predominantly aimed at the blokes, what can be done?

"Nearly all the programmers, all the game designers and all the people in the games business are men – and obviously they want to write games that excite themselves. If there were more women involved in the whole creative process, then I'm sure that would show in the games."

GIRLS' GAMES

Games such as *Mickey Mouse, Ecco, Sonic* may not be in the majority, but they're a step in the right direction, yes?

"Yes, I've found that *Ecco* is a lot more popular with women than with blokes. But even in *Mickey Mouse* it's the boy that sets out to rescue the girl – and I don't want to get on a soapbox about this, but that's the sort of tradition that's keeping games the way they are. Don't get me wrong, teenagers of today won't be patronised. There would be no point releasing a girlie, pink doll game or anything like that." (*Barbie* the game – a truly frightening concept – is currently doing the rounds on the NES.)

"In my experience girls love a good shoot-'em-up or a decent sports game as much as the boys, it's just that a lot of decent games are marketed on the back of boyish imagery."

Sega and Nintendo's advertising campaigns have both relied solely on the single bloke angle...

"Yes, but here's something interesting. A couple of months ago we were filming at one of Sega's board meetings. They'd run a competition with some schools and so there were some kids there who were asked what they thought of Sega's advertising. The kids pointed out that there were no women in the ads – there was just this Jimmy geezer who reckoned he was really hard. What the kids wanted to see was a powerful woman like Madonna, or Cher, and Sega were very interested to hear this and started discussing the idea of getting a woman into an ad. But the telling point is that they couldn't come up with any woman who would be ideal for the part – partly because there are very few young, strong women on TV, in music or anything. There are a couple of megastars, but that's it really.

"But at least they're trying, I'm sure a lot of companies are very scared of losing their hard-core support from the boys."

So on the whole are things getting better?

"Yes, I do feel optimistic. I do care that some girls are still missing out on video games – simply because they'd never think of getting into them. But things are certainly getting better." Ⓜ

"Frankly, I think the software companies are stupid for not putting more female characters into video games"

These features are designed firstly to give you an insight as to how the pros go about writing a game, and secondly to set you up with all the guidance you need to design your own masterpiece. If you're keen to actually give it a shot, we'll be organising some sort of prize for the best ideas/designs that are sent in. More details of that later.

But before we go any further, let's get something straight: there is no magic formula for creating smashing software. If there was, everyone would be knocking out number ones (instead of number twos).

Although there are no firm rules for designing entertainment software, there are some loose guidelines to follow, especially if you are serious about selling your work to a top publisher.

This short series of features isn't by any means a definitive course of action. It's merely a means to an end, by which time you should have a greater understanding of how it all works.

Here are two points to remember:

● Never lose sight of the fact that 90% of software is cack (even most software publishers admit that 80% of stuff is at best "mediocre" and it's only the top 20% of games which are really worth bothering with). *You* can do better.

● Never ever forget that people are playing for *fun*. They don't want to be unnecessarily frustrated by your oh-so-clever design.

In a nutshell, we need to consider how your concept will look, how it will sound, and how it will feel. At this stage it's only fair to say that there's a hell of a lot more to think about than it first seems, and we can't cover it all here.

> **You don't have to know what makes the Mega Drive tick, but you do have to realise its limitations**

LIMITS

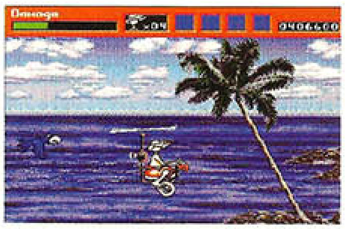
Entertainment software created in Europe is usually designed by programmers. Not all of them are competent designers, but they are at present the best people for the job. There is a good reason for this.

An entertainment software designer needs to consider the limitations of the target hardware (in this case the Sega Mega Drive) and, to a certain extent, the limitations of the programmer in question.

You don't have to know what makes the Mega Drive tick as such, but you do have to realise that it's capable of only so much. The Mega Drive can display only so many different sprites at any one time. They can't be too large either. And do you really need a dozen layers of parallax?

These limitations don't mean you have to compromise your artistic integrity. You just have to be a little more realistic with your concepts.

A worthwhile task to help you become familiar with what is and what isn't possible is to look at your favourite software and make a list of everything that appeals to you about it – even the tiniest things. Then make a list of the bits that irritate you. Now pick on some rubbish software. Write a list of the ways in which you reckon you could improve it. In both cases, look at the size and quantity of the different characters on screen. Does the scenery scroll? How many layers of parallax are involved?



In *Greendog*, the cool surfer dude cycles gracefully over a background of glorious multi-layer parallax, oh, and a palm tree

CDs can store so much information that they offer programmers a great chance to design a complex intro. On cart, can you afford the memory?

OK, so now let's imagine you're designing your own game. Assuming that you're not an expert programmer and you intend merely selling the idea to a publisher and then letting them do the hard work themselves, let's take a look at what they'll want to see from you.

PRESENTATION

Whether your design's good or not, publishers like to see things done properly. The better your design is presented, the more chance you have of the publisher taking note.

A single hand-written sheet won't capture anyone's imagination. Nor – yawn – will a big wadge of the stuff. Your design needs to be presented in an eye-catching way and broken down into easily digestible parts. No stone must be left unturned. We will discuss this later.

Almost all publishers like to see a

Turn over

Just how are games designed? Who decides what the game character looks like? And could you really do any better? In the first of a brand new series of articles, Gary Penn lifts the lid off the mysterious world of game design, and shows you how to create a classic...

Building the P

12 OF THE BEST CHARACTERS?

We asked top games designer and graphic artist Jon Hare (of *Mega-Lo-Mania* fame) to give character references for 12 of the most popular game heroes...

So here are the stars from some of the most successful Mega Drive games – but did the games sell well *because of* the characters or *in spite of* them? A character can't sell a game on his or her own – there's got to be a decent amount of gameplay underneath.

But some characters are undoubtedly better than others – and that's where Jon Hare comes in to give us his expert opinion as to which are the diamond geezers of gameplay and which are the, erm, Keith Chegwins. Jon's been involved in games design for years now and is currently working on a version of top-selling *Sensible Soccer* for the Mega Drive due for release sometime before Christmas. He also co-designed the ground-breaking *Mega-Lo-Mania*, reviewed on page 38.

So without further ado let's roll on the 12 contestants...

POND LIFE

Chris Sorrell talks about how he went about inventing the popular James Pond character. Over to you Chris...

The original idea for the Pond character came after I'd finished writing *Yolanda*, a platform game for the Amiga – it was a conversion, and my first test to see if I could program. I was then given the opportunity to come up with my own game, so I roughly sketched out some ideas and one was a cute style of game involving a fish.

It's hard to say where the idea for a fish came from, but I would say the main reason was I wanted something that hadn't been done before, and a fish seemed like a good choice. I also liked the idea of a fish escaping from captivity, perhaps washed down a plughole, to start a new life of heroism. It didn't quite work out like that, but it did spark off the idea for the character.

After *Robocod* I wanted something in a completely new setting. I think it's wrong to try to do the same thing again – any sequel-type games need something completely new about them really. The idea for setting it on the moon came about because it was just such a completely different setting, especially for fish. The wacky concept appealed to me.

I began thinking of abilities for Pond, and straight away I decided that I wanted him to walk around walls, which was especially nice with the moon's gravity, and I also wanted a way of portraying the moon as a different environment. I wasn't sure I could do it at that stage, but I was sure it could be done because Sonic sort of does it.

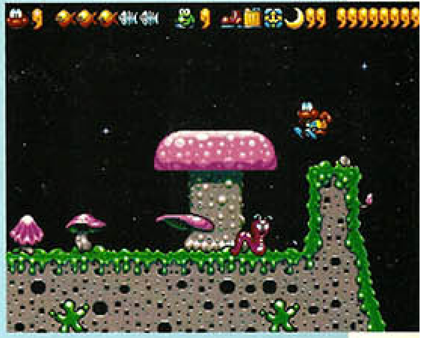
FLASH CHARACTER

At that stage, Pond 3 was hoped to be Splash Gordon, but as it's turned out we're steering clear of that. The obvious idea was to make him look like a Flash Gordon-type character – again, that comes from the setting. It was intended to be a spoof of all things science fiction, with the music in the style of Star Wars and so on. I'd defined the style very early on.

The storyline is important and needs to be considered very early on. I had to decide why he was up there. Once you have the storyline, ideas stem from it. The storyline will play a large part in anything I design in the future as it offers so many possibilities.

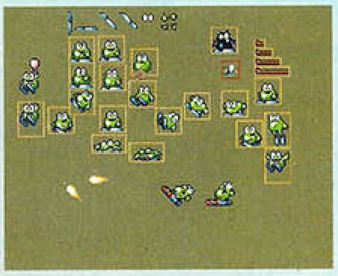
GETTING THINGS IN MOTION

I don't draw on paper – I go straight to computer. I spent time redesigning Pond so he was bigger than Robocod and it would allow him to do a lot more. He needed feet somehow for the gravity boots, and this was the biggest difficulty. Most of his abilities weren't decided at that stage. I knew he'd have a rocket to enable him to travel from level to level, and a buggy to drive around in – that came from *Robocod* and the space theme. A lot of ideas are connected to ideas in *Robocod* and *James Pond* and adapted for the new setting. From then, it was straight into the programming for the scrolling, so I could get Pond running around walls.

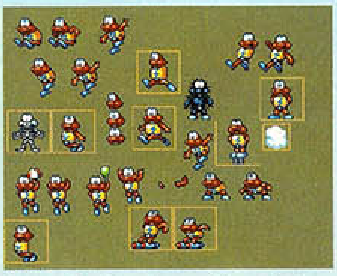


Quick! Mr Space-worm there's a 120 lb cod wearing moon boots about to bounce on your head. No, *really!*

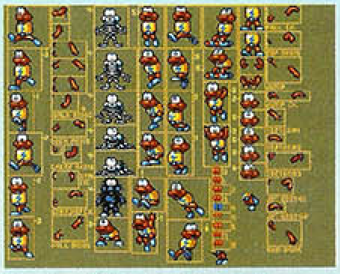
The character's got to be likable and controllable with a good range of things to do. I try to come up with completely wacky ideas, but ideas with a thread. Finneous came into it after I heard rumours of Sonic having a mate – although he wasn't the first – and it seemed like a good idea. Part of doing a game is to compete with others, bearing them in mind and designing so that your idea's comparable to its competitors. I felt like drawing a frog, and there he was. Then, of course, I had to give him reason for being: a trainee agent.



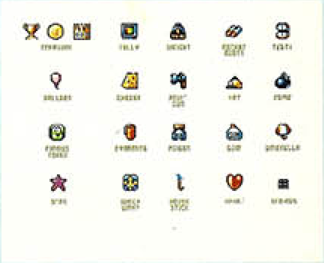
How Finneous Frog appears: a) after 115 pints of Stella; b) on paper



James Pond tools up with gadgets and expressions for a new adventure



Check out the skeleton death-sequence and jet skates. Pain ahoy!



Power-ups should also be designed in the character's style

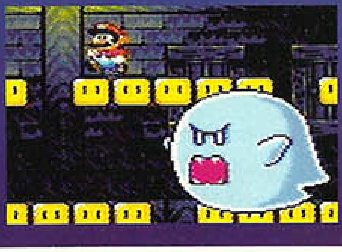
ERFECT game

SONIC

For starters, it's a good name. He's interesting to watch while he's moving (he rolls!) and this adds more to a character's definition. A rather large £2-3 million advertising budget helped – it's amazing how people can be persuaded to buy something if it's thrown at them enough times.

MARIO

As with Sonic, Mario is more than just a computer game character – he's a marketing tool. The images of Mario we see in the media world help to build up an image of a real-life Danny de Vito-type character, which distracts us from the fact that really he's a rather dull looking sprite.



A LEMMING

These are great in-game characters, the excellent animation giving lots of life to these cleverly drawn little thingies. The Lemmings are small, hence they look like "real" things and less like something larger and more artificially animated. The sound effects help make them better still.

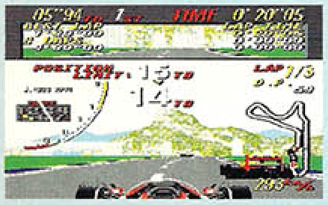
TAZ

He's an accurate version of the cartoon character and has a strong identity. He's original, and most people could recognise him from a description of what he does. There's nice accurate definition of animation, good touches when you leave him alone, interesting and lively character definition.

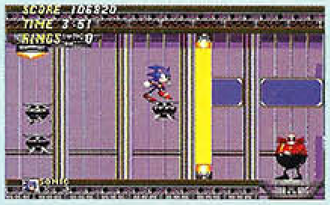
GRAPHICAL VIEWPOINT

Fairly early on you have to determine the viewpoint of the player. Will your concept be seen from a first- or second-person perspective? Is any scrolling involved?

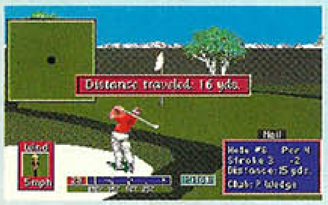
There are many second-person perspective viewpoints to choose from. Your concept could be seen from the side, from above or from a less obvious angle (but remember: you have to be able to play this). You may even think of another method altogether of displaying your piece.



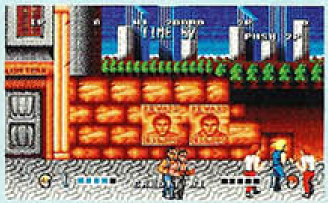
An example of first-person perspective: a view through the eyes of the screen persona – the driver – in *Super Monaco GP*. Note how this angle severely lowers your view of the road ahead



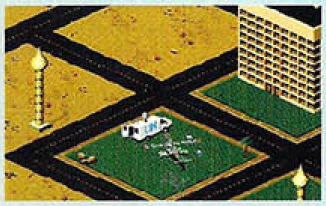
***Sonic The Hedgehog's* second-person perspective is from the side. This two-dimensional approach is the most popular of all player perspectives with games designers. It's fast and efficient**



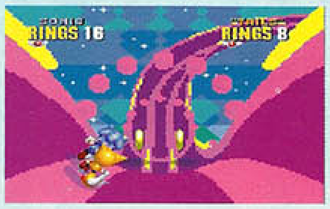
An example of a common second-person perspective: a view through the eyes of an observer, which closely follows the screen persona. Easier to program than the first-person perspective



Double Dragon's* second-person perspective has a forced three-dimensional effect, thus increasing the size of the playfield. Although the player's area is restricted, this is the same as in *Desert Strike



A different perspective altogether – a view from above. It's all a matter of deciding which view best serves your game purpose. This view-point enables the chopper pilot to look all around



Another second-person 3D perspective, this time used to great effect in *Sonic 2*. This way Sonic and Tails can play simultaneously without resorting to the split-screen mode

design supported by something on a computer, be it an animation sequence or a demonstration. This could prove to be a problem if you haven't got a computer and an art package or simply can't draw to save your life. We can work around this.

IDEAS

You need a starting point. This is not a problem. Unlike money, ideas are literally growing on trees. You can start with a storyline, a theme, a situation or simply a character. Or just think of something which makes you laugh, anything, even a household object...

Look, there's an idea on the mantelpiece: a ceramic short, fat, bearded sailor with a big head and HMS HERO (now there's a potential title) written across his hat, which has a slot in it for loose change. Nintendo's Mario character was based on the landlord of a house which the game's originator used to rent while living in Brooklyn – and this is now the second most famous game character in the world.

> **Characters with large heads, small bodies and large, round eyes are generally winners**

GAME STYLE

How will your concept be presented? What style of playability will best suit it? Your brainwave may instantly lend itself to one of the existing genres: is it a driving game, a flying game, a sports game, a shoot-'em-up, a platformer, an RPG, or what? Or you may simply have decided to create a shoot-'em-up, beat-'em-up, platform run 'n' jump romp, or whatever, from scratch. Sonic broke new ground when he first appeared.

With your concept in hand – or mind – write down as many associated ideas as possible, be they characters, animals, foods, objects, activities, scenery, suggested sounds, music, colours, shapes and moods. You can really let your imagination run riot. Make a note of everything that springs to mind – don't be afraid, because the silliest ideas may develop (and anyway, you can always discard them later or use them elsewhere).

THE STAR OF THE SHOW

Let's forget beat-'em-ups and shoot-'em-ups and puzzlers for now. Let's start with the main character for a platformer. Is it animal, vegetable or mineral? Is it human? Or is it a strange mish-mash of a creature? What kind of abilities will it have? It could be a mouse, or a chicken; a chicken that lays explosive eggs, and wears flying goggles perhaps.

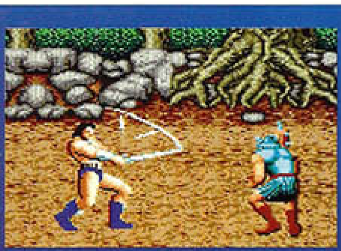
The character could come from a storyline of some sort or an idea for an environment. Fairy tales are quite daft and can provide inspiration. It might help to give our character a name. It doesn't necessarily need sexual stereotyping, but it should have an identity. Let's make a list...

Now, seeing as this is MEGA magazine, something mega would make sense. MEGA has an air of skill about it, too. Some other hard-sounding words include super, smash, death and power. We reckon you can easily think of many more words like these.

Here are some names: MegaBoy, MegaChick, MegaGal, MegaKid, Mr Mega, Mrs Mega... Oh dear. How about MegaKid? That sounds nice. We will probably think of another, more appropriate, moniker along the way anyway.

MegaKid needs to run, and jump. We all like to run and jump. MegaKid could hold an object in his or her hands or mouth and perhaps throw or spit it at things. MegaKid could have a special weapon to throw at things. A boomerang? A rock? (Sorry, Chuck.) A bouncing ball? His, her or its head? (Sorry, Chuck.)

MegaKid certainly needs a special ability or two. Think of all the fun things you'd like to do. Here are a few we know we'd really enjoy...

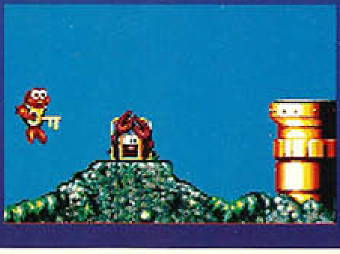


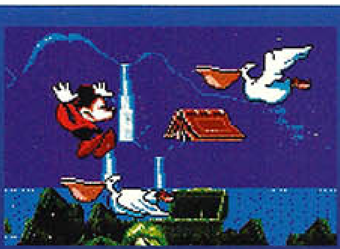
AX BATTLER (FROM *GOLDEN AXE*)

Historical hunky superhero with big muscles and boring big-platform gameplay – beat-'em-up, axe-'em-up, snooze-'em-up. I hate macho **** no matter how nicely the characters are drawn. Sorry, but that's the way it is.

JAMES POND

Ha ha Mr Pond, I see that your terrible pun has earned you several million dollars. Actually, James is quite a cute character, though can anyone be sure that he's not a goldfishfinger? (Read how Chris Sorrell came up with the idea for Jim Pond on page 17 of this feature.)



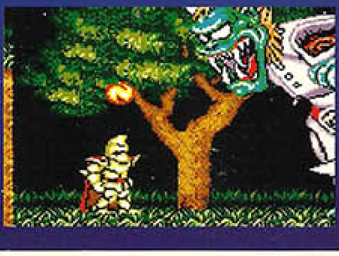


MICKEY MOUSE

If this game had flopped, one or two young Japs might well have topped themselves. He's the ultimate character licence, everyone knows who Mickey is. He's a bit like Heinz Baked Beans really; a sort of time tested seal of quality that would have survived even if the game had been a flop.

SIR ARTHUR (FROM *GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS*)

This one is actually quite original for a human character – reminiscent of Noggin The Nog for some reason. Nice and un-macho for a game of this type, which makes a pleasant change – I like him. The underpants bit is fantastic.



Flying would be fun (but not all the time – that'd get boring). Swimming underwater without having to worry about holding your breath would be neat. So too would snogging Helena Bonham Carter (how did that get in here?). These are things which have been done before, but we shouldn't be afraid of doing them again when we can do them better!

What else? Farting. That's a bit rude, but it could be funny. Licking? Now, it's getting silly again. But it's often the silly ideas that pay dividends. I mean, who would have thought that a blue hedgehog that wears sneakers and has to collect gold rings would ever catch on?

VISUAL STYLE

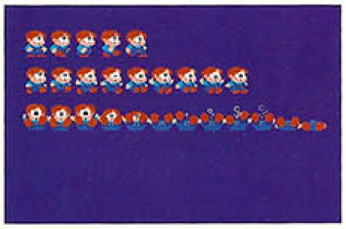
You need a look which reflects the concept. It could be cartoon-like, or deadly serious, dark and moody, abstract...

Your newly created character (and world for that matter) should have an exaggerated look or sound to make it more memorable. Psychologists say that people don't easily forget the absurd, sexual, vulgar, sensual (take it easy with those last three; this is a family show after all – Neil), and bright and gaudy colours (urgh).

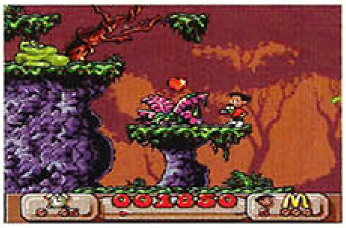
They also reckon circular rounded shapes are more pleasing to the eye (how many cute characters do you know that aren't well rounded?). Triangular pointy ones are aggressive, apparently. And square shapes are more ambiguous.

CHARACTERISATION

The star of the show must have charisma. A gimmick of some description would help, so too would a reason for being (man).



A model sheet, ie animation frames, for Bubby out of *Rainbow Islands*. Note the baby-like proportions and the big, cute eyes. Bleurgh – maybe, but he is one of the most popular game characters ever



Mick (or is it Mack?): looking good in *Global Gladiators*. Cool but cuddly seems to be the maxim that works in the Nineties

Cute characters often have proportions similar to those of a baby: large head, small body and large, round eyes. This is, so it's said, because babies are perceived as innocent and friendly. And we all know you can't trust someone whose eyes are too small and close together. Steven Spielberg based ET on a baby – and you can bet your last joypad that he did some research into which sort of characterisation is most appealing.

We don't want too cute a character though, otherwise the player will end up chuckling over the screen. Someone like Sonic is quite cool. The Mick and Mack characters in *Global Gladiators* look pretty good, too.

Make sketches of your character and detail his features. It doesn't matter if you can't draw to save your life – so long as the idea is made clear. You could draw a model sheet – like cartoonists do – of the character's most important poses.

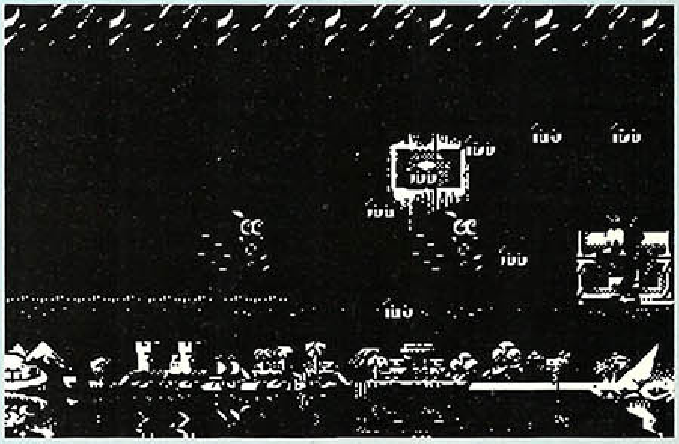
MEGAKID COMPO

Now it's your turn. Send us your suggestions and sketches for the MegaKid character (you may even think of a better name). Before we go, we also need a name for our concept. Let's call it... the MEGAProject. Dear me. Tune in next month to see how our main character shapes up.

Send your game characters and basic design concepts to MEGAProject, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. We'll dig up a prize for the best entries, and pass them on to some of the leading games publishers. You never know, this could well be the start of something big. Ⓜ

A COOL CHARACTER

Andrew Braybrook talks about the creation of Cool Coyote for his forthcoming platformer *Fire And Ice*



I knew from the start I wanted to do a side-on platform-type thing... You do need a rough storyline at the beginning. I knew that the main character was going from a cold country, where he lives, to somewhere very hot. It was a way of including variety. The temperature controls the difficulty. The character finds it harder to use his cold powers in heat, and you expect to be attacked by harder things.

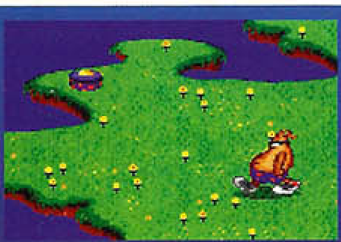
I thought about the character and his control mode: whether he would pick things up, throw things, shoot things; what special items he could use, and how he'd move and jump.

I also knew early on that I wanted to have puppies in *Fire And Ice*. Their role increased during development. They started simply as things which you were supposed to find. They were fairly dumb, and just followed you around. Then I got them to fire when you did, and then I had it so you could send them away from you – make them go ahead and act like a shield. The meanies can't kill them off, but things like falling into lava kills a puppy.

PICTURES ON PAPER

I'd suggest you write down as much as possible. Draw diagrams – a picture's worth a thousand words. There's no need to think precisely. You don't have to decide whether the character jumps 62 pixels, just give him a height and build. It usually changes anyway.

Talk to as many people as you can – input's always useful even if you discard it at a later date. If you see an idea you like, build on it rather than steal it. Be aware of the limitations other people are under. Sonic hasn't got many meanies on screen – is there a reason for that? It's the machine's limitations.

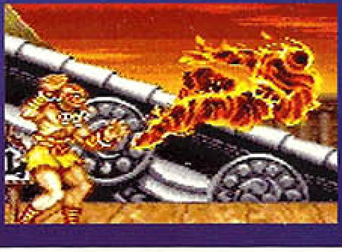


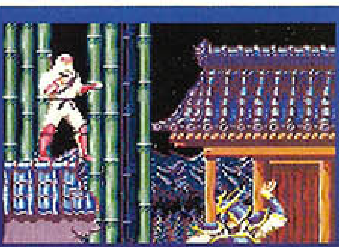
TOEJAM AND EARL

The two cool characters in this game are not exactly brilliantly drawn, but they are quite a good idea in their own way. They hit the Mega Drive at the right time – they seem to capture the imagination of gamers for some reason. Good bassline backing music too.

DHALSIM (FROM *STREETFIGHTER 2*)

Truly original game character with unusual movement and great subtle characterisation. Nice cliché floating touches when he wins – a truly memorable character and a lot better than the three or so musclebound martial arts opponents.



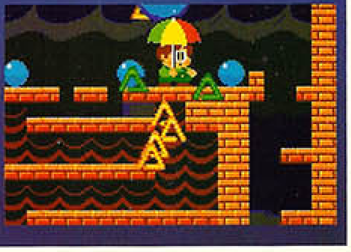


JO MUSASHI (FROM *REVENGE OF SHINOBI*)

Ah so. What a truly individual sprite this one is – he looks like he's been in a few different games in his time – a bit like the bikini-clad girl with big tits in all the Bond films. Oriental hunk for skinny wimps with a sad life. No thanks.

BUB AND BOB (FROM *RAINBOW ISLANDS*)

Despite the fact that they look like a couple of salt-shakers, these two suit the game *Rainbow Islands* very well. But it was the gameplay that made *Rainbow Islands* such a success – and certainly not the two characters you see below.



IT'S THE MEGA READER AWARDS '92

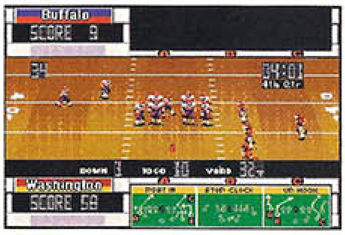
Tuxedos, Terry Wogan, dodgy celebrities handing out gongs, pretending you don't know who's won, Norway refusing to vote – Neil West waves two fingers at the lot of them and so presents these awards from… the carpark. "Thank you. Bit cold out here, but hey – I've always had a thing for Volvos. Back in issue four of MEGA (when chestnuts were still roasting on open fires and the whole Christmas experience was in full swing) we asked you lot to give us your votes for the best of 1992. There were five categories, loads of votes, a couple of surprises and lots of adding up to be done. Anyway, without further ado, here's what you lot thought was the cream of last year's crop…"

BEST SPORTS GAME

Results:

1. *John Madden '93* – EA Sports
2. *NHLPA Hockey* – EA Sports
3. *Euro Club Soccer* – Virgin Games

Madders steams in for another year at the top. *John Madden '94 – Madden On The Moon* will undoubtedly top the tree next year as well.

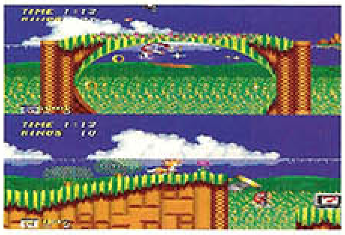


BEST PLATFORM GAME

Results:

1. *Sonic 2*
2. *Robocod*
3. *Terminator*

Hardly surprising really, but *Robocod* made a decent showing despite being a year old. And for a fish in a shop, that's an impressive innings



BEST SHOOT-'EM-UP

Results:

1. *Desert Strike*
2. *Thunderforce 4*
3. *Terminator 2*

Not strictly a shoot-'em-up, but *Desert Strike* does contain a fair old wadge of shooting antics. And besides, it's a fab 'n' groovesome game anyway.

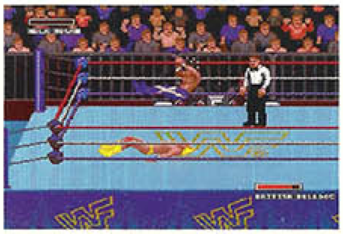
TERMINATOR ONE:
TERMINATOR TWO:
PAUSE

BEST BEAT-'EM-UP

Results:

1. *Streets Of Rage 2*
2. *WWF Super Wrestle Mania*
3. *Golden Axe 2*

Streets Of Rage 2 only just made it in time for the voting, but make it it did and it raced straight to the top. But have you realised how easy it is to finish yet?



BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE

Results:

1. Electronic Arts
2. Sega
3. Virgin Games

Sega in second place! What thrills, but Electronic Arts made the first place with votes to spare. Virgin Games have big plans to become number one in 1993.

ELECTRONIC ARTS®

SEGA®

Virgin™ GAMES

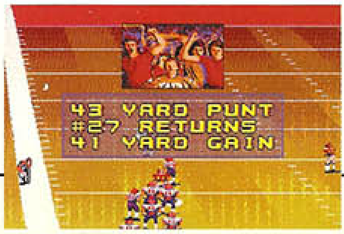
BEST MEGA DRIVE GAME OVERALL

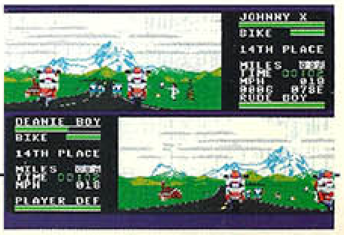
Results:

1. *Sonic 2*
2. *John Madden '93*
3. *Road Rash 2*

Three of the best ever Mega Drive games!

SCORE 50200
TIME
RINGS 100
SONIC
MILES





And to celebrate being voted number one software house in 1992, EA have generously agreed to give away £2,000 worth of carts! (And we wouldn't have made them feel guilty if they'd said no, honest.)

ELECTRONIC ARTS TOP THE CHARTS!

WIN! £2,000 of EA carts!

The telephone conversation went something like this:

"Hello Electronic Arts, may I take pleasure in announcing that you've just been voted number one software house for 1992 by MEGA readers?"

"SMAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAART! We do love MEGA readers."

"How much?"

"Oooh, lots."

"Really? £2,000 worth of love?"

"At least!"

"Ha! Give us loads of competition prizes then."

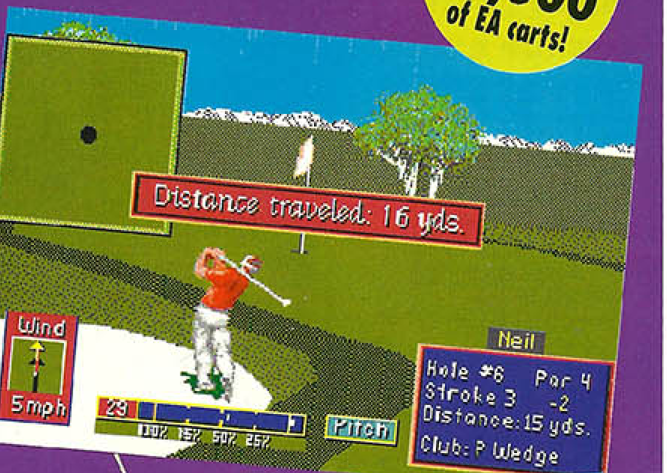
"EH? Hang on! Oh... well, alright then. Yes! Why not? They deserve it. You can give away 50 EA carts – and they can be whatever the readers want."

"Fab."

And so it came to pass that page 21 of MEGA would experience a change of fate. That fateful telephone conversation marked a crossroads in page 21's life. It abandoned its dream of becoming a hastily cobbled-together part of Dyer's previews; and instead looked forward to a bright new future as a competition. Yes, and this is probably the pinnacle of a page's ambition. How the page sobbed with joy, how its tiny lettering pulsated with pride as the words were typed onto its clean white surface, how... (we wondered what the smeg's wrong with your brain West? You're losing it, you do know that, don't you? – Andy.)

Ahem. We have 50 EA carts to give away, and that means ten prizes of five EA carts of your choice. So send your list of the five games you'd like (from the list shown), along with your name, address and answer to the following question to the: "EA really are rather fab compo," P O Box 10, Sunderland, SR4 6SN. (Write your name, age and address on the postcard or sealed down envelope and write "NO" if you do not wish to receive direct mail from selected companies.)

Here's the question: John Madden used to coach and play American football. When he's not helping EA design games, what does he do for a living now?



X 02
00010700

RULES

Yes, we know, it's the boring little rules box in the corner of the competition page. But with £2000 worth of carts up for grabs, we're sure you'll forgive us. So, the rules are...

1. Your entries must reach us before 31 March 1993
2. The editor's decision is final
3. No employees of Future Publishing or Electronic Arts can enter
4. Enough rules

CHOOSE FIVE OF THE FOLLOWING TITLES...

Battle Squadron
Blockout
Buck Rogers
Budokan
Bulls Vs Lakers
Centurion: Defender of Rome
Crue Ball
Dark Castle
Desert Strike
EA Hockey
F-22 Interceptor
Faery Tale Adventure
Galahad
Immortal
James Pond
James Pond 2
John Madden Football
John Madden '92
John Madden '93
Jordan vs Bird
Kings Bounty
Lakers Vs Celtics
LHX Attack Chopper
Lotus Turbo Challenge
Marble Madness
NHLPA Hockey
PGA Tour Golf
PGA Tour Golf 2
Populous
Powermonger
Rings of Power
Risky Woods
Road Rash
Road Rash 2
Rolo to the Rescue
Starflight
Where In The World is Carmen San Diego?
Where In Time is Carmen San Diego?
Zany Golf

MEGA & STRIDER 2

In the February issue of MEGA we reviewed US Gold's *Strider 2*. We now understand, however, that the version we reviewed was incomplete, and that the final version will be very much changed and improved.

We therefore withdraw our remarks and rating of this game.

We would also like to apologise unreservedly to US Gold for any damage and distress caused by our review.

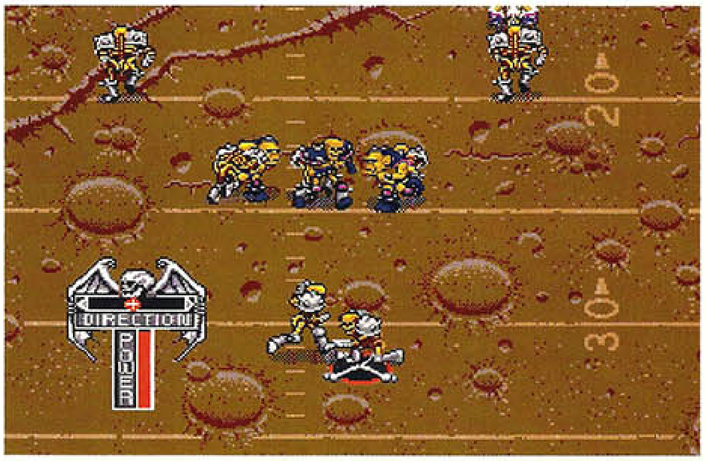
The fully finished version of *Strider 2* will be reviewed in our next issue, April 1993.

Neil's gone to America this month, so Andy Dyer takes the opportunity to say things like "Westy smells" and "Neil is a big girl's blouse" before he gets on with the previews

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL

Electronic Arts • March

In fact, I can continue hurling abuse at Stinky West even into this little intro here. Chortle, guffaw, snort!



This skeletal blokey is about to boot the ball, hence the appearance of that meter, which allows him to adjust the direction and power of his kick

Having created the best ever ice hockey game twice over and the best American footy game three times in a row, Electronic Arts have decided to go a bit strange on us. They've stuck to the American footy theme, but they've come up with a sort of *Madden's* for mutants. The idea may be somewhat abstract, but there are echoes of *Madden's* in here, what with the vertical pitch scrolling, and similar display and presentation features.

During play, the direction and power meter for kicks is displayed. When you carry out a play, the top portion of the screen shows three different viewpoints and selecting plays is fairly standard stuff. It's only when you actually play the game that you realise the differences. Basically, this is comedy football. The real thing is violent enough, but in *Mutant League Football* people actually get killed. In fact, during the course of a game it's quite possible to kill off a whole team.

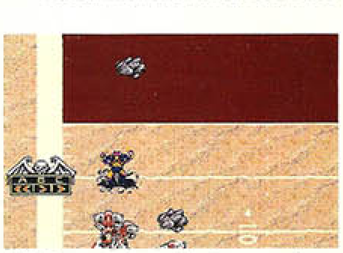
The options allow you to select some fairly normal plays or you can go straight for the really violent moves. There's something strangely satisfying about seeing one of your opponents dismembered in the middle of the pitch. To be honest, it's actually quite funny when it happens to one of your own team members too. Especially amusing is the occasional, and rather unnecessary, slaughter of the referee. Yep, now and again a team will launch an unprovoked attack on the ref, tear him limb from limb, and leave his various portions scattered all over the field. Ho, ho, ho!

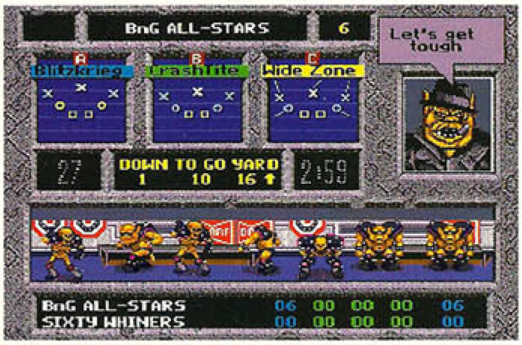
However, the opponents aren't the only hazard you'll come up against in this game. Some of the pitches are littered with obstructions: boulders, hidden land mines, holes or simply huge gaping chasms around the edge for you to fall into. One of the pitches is even covered in ice.

But there's more to American footy and mutant footy than just wholesale slaughter, isn't there chaps? You also have to put up with the insane rantings of your coach. There's a different one for each team and they all, without exception, have bizarre habits. One bloke's eyes bulge right out of his head and another one claws at his own face, stretching it beyond all recognition.

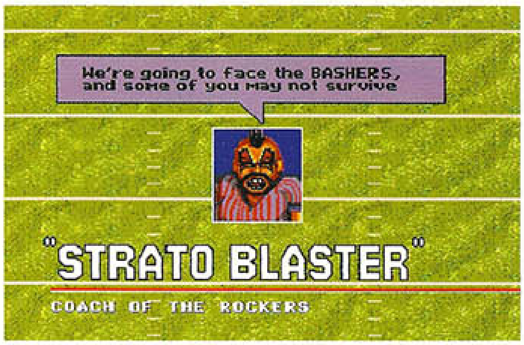
The team members themselves are also

Yes, we know it's just a title screen, but it looks so gorgeous that we couldn't resist showing it to you. Get a load of those lightning bolts


This is no ordinary footy game. Your player's just fallen down a hole



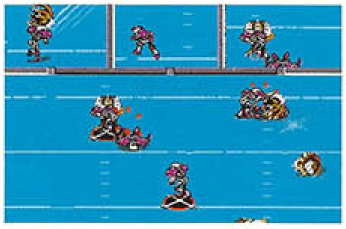
One of the funniest things about this game is the coach. He makes inane comments, and his eyes bulge a lot


We're going to face the BASHERS, and some of you may not survive
"STRATO BLASTER"
COACH OF THE ROCKERS

Here's another coach and this one's even stranger. Looks like a member of the WWF crew, don't you think?

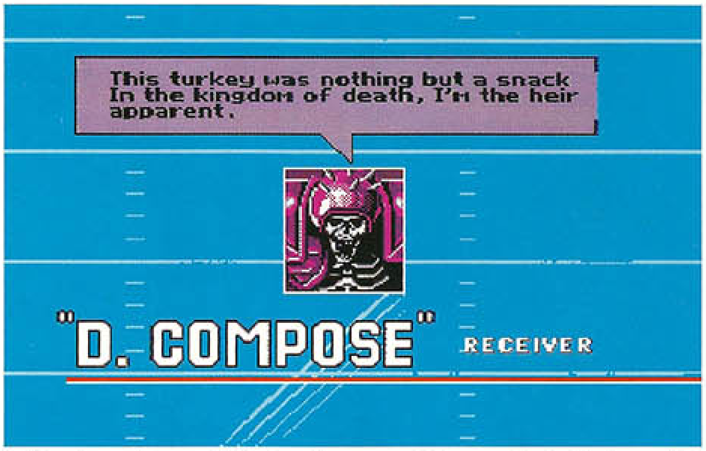
ALL-STARS
SCORING DRIVE
PLAYS
YARDS
TIME

And the crowd are going wild. Ugly mothers though, aren't they?



It's hard to know what's going on here, but it doesn't look too pleasant

This is the replay feature. It's just like fast forward and reverse on a video


This turkey was nothing but a snack In the kingdom of death, I'm the heir apparent.
"D. COMPOSE"
RECEIVER

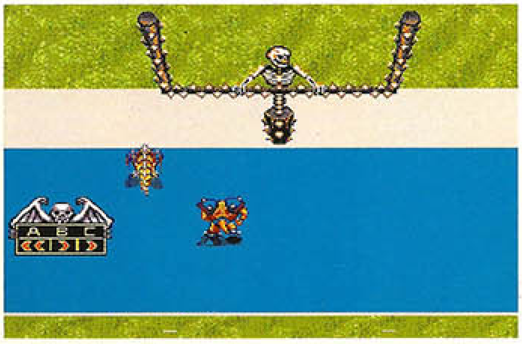
All the players have suitably horrific names. D Compose looks like he could do with a few cooked meals like mother used to make

rather comical and have such bizarre names as D Compose and, well, and anything else that sounds remotely gory, horrific and generally unpleasant. The referees are also fairly vile. When one gets murdered, the next grotesque mutie appears, usually accompanied by some threatening message. And even their names give you a clue as to their on-pitch politics. For example, I can't imagine you'll get much trouble from a referee called I C Nothing.

I can't pretend to be a great American footy fan, so if when this game's finished, the playability and staying power is up to scratch, it may well be different enough from the real thing to grab the attention of indifferent fans like myself. It looks promising already, because the gore level is very high and there are dozens of comical touches in here.

Of course, we've only seen an unfinished version as yet, but it has to be said, it's looking pretty slick. It looks like *Mutant League Football* might be just what those die-hard *Madden's* fans have been waiting for. When they've finished playing their favourite American footy cart to death, but they still want more, this'll probably be the next obvious step. Look out for the review in the very next issue of MEGA.

While we're on the subject of Electronic Arts, it's worth mentioning that Neil's been to America to see what's up and coming on the Mega Drive front. If you turn to the news pages quickly, you'll be able to see the first screenshots of EA's follow up to the massively popular *Desert Strike*. It's called *Jungle Strike* and looks like it's going to be every bit as good as its predecessor.



Score a field goal, and that skeleton's head on the goalpost whizzes up and down. Why? Who knows

Mmm... This bloke's been, er, injured. I doubt he'll be playing any more games this season, or ever again

UP 'N' COMING...

Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah... well what do you expect? It's a previews diary which tells you all about up 'n' coming releases. It's bloody obvious, isn't it?

MARCH

Muhammad Ali's Boxing – Virgin
A 3D view of the ring and 360 degrees rotation around it make this the best boxing game.
Mega-Lo-Mania – Virgin
Teach your people to fight, make weapons and make babies in this god simulation.
Sunset Riders – Konami
An ancient coin-op, but the chance to play bounty-hunting Wild-West cowboys has got to be good.
André Agassi Tennis – Tecmagik
A tennis sim in which you have to win Wimbledon, get carried away and leave yer girlie for Barbra Streisand.
Rise Of The Dragon (CD) – Sega
Mmm, not really sure about this one, but we'll try to get hold of it for our very next issue.
Battle Toads – Tradewest
A platform shoot-'em-up and beat-'em-up all rolled into one. It's fab on the SNES.
Pro Quarterback – Tradewest
It's American football time again. Wonder what the programmers can do that's new this time?
International Rugby Simulator – Domark
The rugby world cup went down a storm on telly last year, so there should be a bit of interest in this game.
Tiny Toon Adventures – Konami
The Tiny Toons are the toddlers of the Looney Toons world. It's a cartoon platform romp and should be brill.

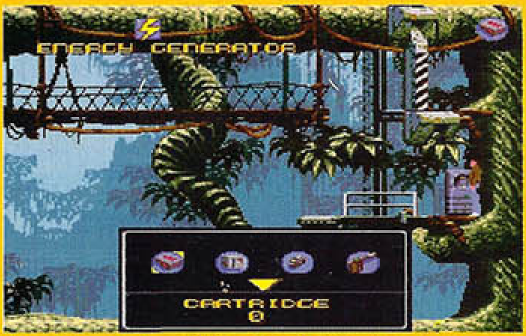
APRIL

Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective (CD) – Sega
If it's anything like the excellent board game, then this should be pretty damn hot.
Microcosm – Psygnosis
We previewed this in the January issue, so we'll hopefully be able to review it soon.
Dracula – Psygnosis
Another British Mega CD title. It's based on the film that is in turn based on the classic novel.
Mutant Football – EA
Bored of spot-on, highly realistic sport sims, it looks like EA have decided to get a bit weird on us. Mutant football indeed!
Paperboy 2 – Domark
I've never liked this game; it was crap in the arcades and will probably be crap here too.
Another World – Virgin
Incredible animation and puzzle-solving action make a pleasant change from the norm.
Mic and Mac – Virgin
Get all eco-conscious and save the rain-forests in this two-payer platform game.
Superman – Virgin
Superman doesn't normally take any stick, except when someone's holding a piece of Kryptonite to his face.
Final Fight (CD) – Sega
One of the best beat-'em-up coin-ops ever gets the Mega CD treatment. All the levels and more.**G-LOC – Sega**
This coin-op is getting on in years, but the game might still be good for a laugh.
The Secret of Monkey Island (CD) – Victor/JVC
A classic RPG on both the Amiga and the PC. The CD version is really good too.

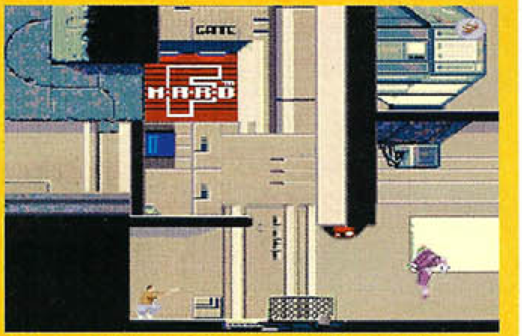
FLASHBACK

US Gold • April

Secret Agent Conrad can't even remember his own name. Then again, neither can I



At certain points you'll have to charge up any keys or cartridges you've collected at these generators



Get your shots in quickly against this jet-packing loon, or he'll shoot off all over the place

This game is like a cross between *Prince of Persia* and *Another World*. And it's no wonder really because both *Another World* and *Flashback* originally came from a software house called Delphine. You'll be glad to know, however, that this game is better than the other two mentioned.

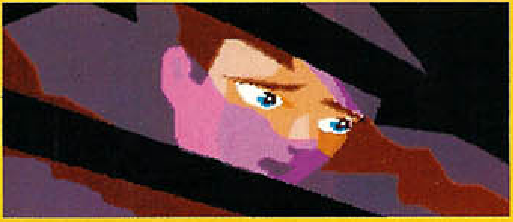
The plot is a bizarre affair involving some bloke called Conrad. He's a special agent you see, and he gets wind of some nefarious plot, hatched by aliens, to take over the earth. As a result, Conrad's memory gets erased and he's whisked off to the aliens' home planet. But later, of course, he finds out it was in fact himself who erased his memory and um, well... oh dear, I seem to have lost the thread. Anyway, the plot's all very Total Recallish and considering what a brilliant film that was, it can be no bad thing.

The animation in this game is superb. In fact, I'd go as far as to say that it's the best I've ever seen. Although the sprite is small, it moves like a real person. *Prince Of Persia* used the same technique but this is very much improved, and Conrad has loads more moves than the Prince. This high attention to animation means that the game plays fairly slowly. Still, the puzzles and hazards are all fairly complex and generally fatal, so it's good that you're forced to progress through the game gradually.

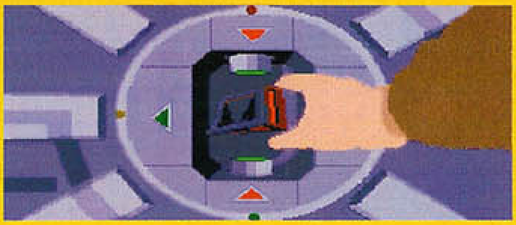
There are three skill levels in the game and selecting a harder level basically means adding more enemies to the proceedings. Whichever skill level you choose there are still the same six levels to get through and that may not sound like many, but they're all huge and pretty tough too. And because of the puzzley nature of the gameplay, you do a lot of to-ing and fro-ing, again extending the life-span.

If I may, I'd just like to digress for a moment. The fact that the plot revolves around Conrad's sudden memory loss is very handy really, because it means that you learn the story of the game by discovery, and it's not until you've finished the whole game that you know precisely what happened. This adds lots of atmosphere to the proceedings. It makes a refreshing change to not have a specific purpose in a game.

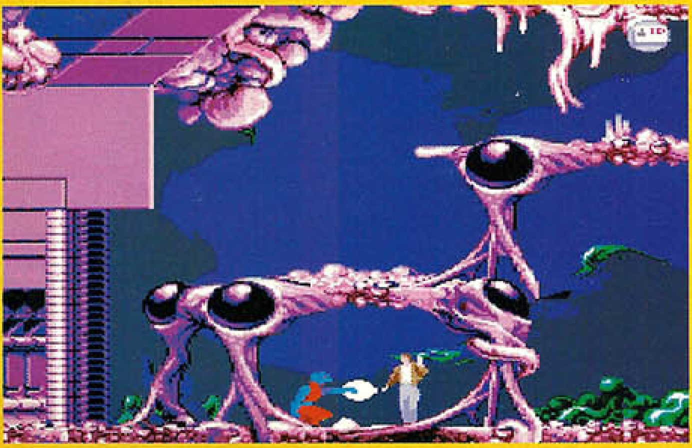
As I've already said, the animation in *Flashback* is a vast improvement over that in *Prince Of Persia*, and what's more there are heaps more puzzles than in *Another World* and as long as there's no real disaster between now and its final release, *Flashback* could turn out to be quite an impressive title. We're keen to play it properly so we'll almost certainly be reviewing it in full in the very next issue of MEGA. And if we don't, please ring us up and blow a large raspberry down the phone at us, all right?



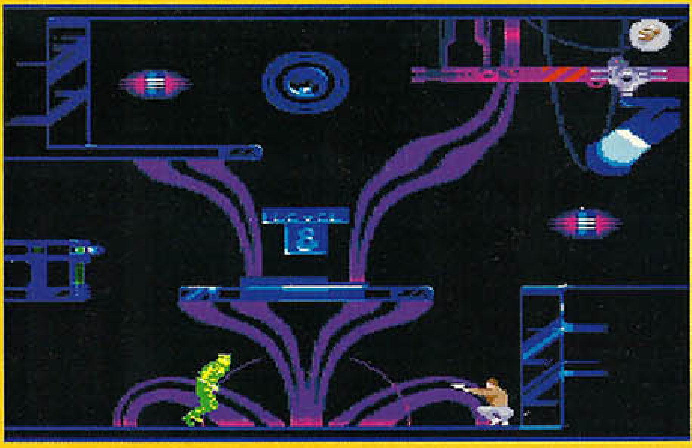
Conrad watches the terrible scene below him. "What's going on?" he wonders, "and where are my teeth?"



This is one of the many cinematic in-between scenes which tart up the game. Only cosmetic, but very nice



You have to keep firing fast at this guy because otherwise he turns into a blob and rolls all over you. If he does, keep moving until he turns back



This enemy is green because we've just caught him in the middle of one of his splendid teleportations. Watch out, he'll pop up behind you in a minute

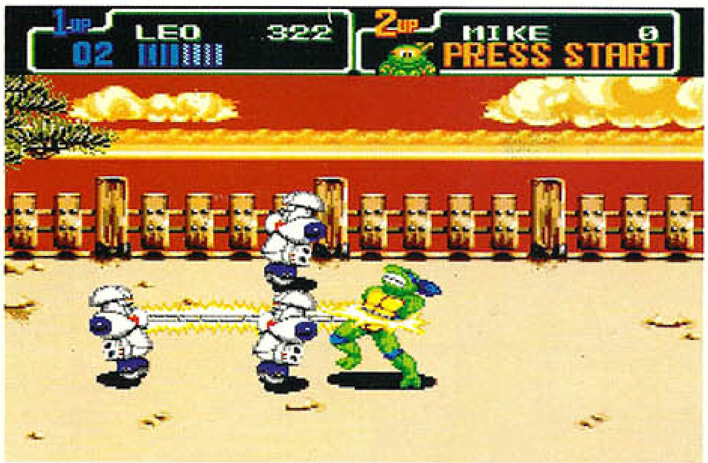
TURTLES
THE HYPERSTONE HEIST

Konami • Out now

Turtle mania may be history, but this game is going to be well worth a look

The turtles aren't really all that big any more, but before you skip past this preview in a fit of disinterest, perhaps you'd better take a closer look. Despite their flagging popularity, what we have here is a smart-looking beat-'em-up.

Not only are the graphics fairly pretty, it also plays fast and the control mechanism is almost perfect. But critical comment can wait until we review the game properly. In the meantime, let's tell you a bit more about it.



This is a turtle being lassoed by a strange robot thingummy. Is there really anything else to say on the matter? (Nope, that's about it – Neil)

The evil Krang (a fat bloke with a strange head-thing in his stomach) aided and abetted by Shredder have managed to steal the Hyperstone. Using this device, they will be able to shrink the city of New York (quite why they'd want to do it is a mystery, but there you go). As usual it's up to the Turtles to save the day. You can either play the game on your own, or simultaneously with a friend. At first the range of moves seems limited, but you soon discover that by using different button combinations you can access loads of 'em. You can attack, jump, jump and kick, back kick, charge, somersault and use a special attack.

Could be a *Streets of Rage 2* beater

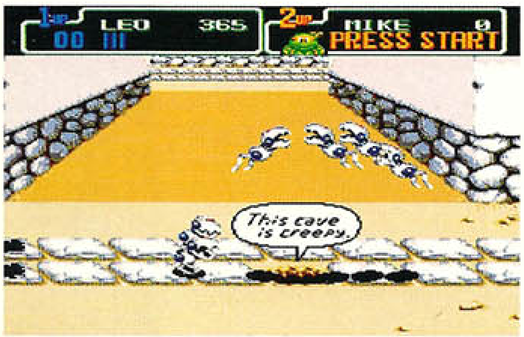
However, the special attack should be used only in emergencies, because it uses up energy at quite a fast rate.

There are five stages each made up of several long sections and within these there's a whole range of challenges awaiting you. The regular ninjas are the least of your worries. There are also many different types of humanoid warriors, who throw shuriken, nunchakas and a whole range of other weapons. Then there are the robots, who either bite you or try to electrocute you. And beyond that, there are other hazards like holes in the floor and electrical force fields.

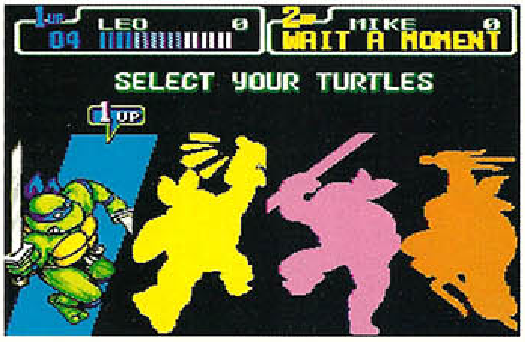
1UP LEO 9
04
2UP MIKE
PRESS START

Leo's just been blatted, hence those whizzy stars above his head

As I've already said, the game looks very smart indeed and the unfussy controls make it play very well too. So if you want to find out if we have a bit of a *Streets Of Rage 2* beater here, read the full review in next month's MEGA.



Leo falls down a hole in a bid to avoid the two-legged robots which are performing a barn dance in the alley above. You can run, but you can't hide Leo



You have four characters to choose from. There's Leonardo, yellow blobby silhouette, pink blobby silhouette and orange blobby silhouette

UP 'N' COMING...

Streetfighter 2 – Sega
At last, it's official. The best beat-'em-up ever will be appearing on our beloved Mega Drives.

MAY

Mig 29 – Domark
Who says the Mega Drive can't handle flight sims? You? Well, you were wrong.

James Pond 3 – EA
Our fishy friend returns in his third game.

JUNE

Jungle Strike – EA
The follow-up to *Desert Strike* is coming. Still striking, but more jungly than deserted.

COMING SOON(ISH)...

Terminator (CD) – Virgin
Will this one use the Mega CD's capabilities to the full, or will it be another platform bore?

F19 – Microprose
A flight sim from the masters of flight sims. And it has an F19 jet fighter in it.

F15 Strike Eagle 2 – Microprose
More airborne simulation from Microprose, only this time it's an F15 in the starring role.

Wing Commander (CD) – Sierra
THE big PC game makes it over to the Mega CD and should be even better than before.

Zombie High – Electronic Arts
Told you EA had gone weird on us. Surely not a high school simulator with zombies in it?

Seven Cities of Gold – Electronic Arts
We don't have a clue what this one will be, but no doubt some sort of RPG is on the cards.

Jester – Sega
Dress up in tights and shout "Hey nonny, the rain it raineth every day!" at passing monarchs.

Dinosaurs for Hire – Sega
Rent-a-bronto sounds rather unlikely doesn't it? Can't wait to see what this is all about.

Road Riot 4WD – Tengen
Get in your four-wheel buggy, get on the road and give them hell.

Gauntlet – Tengen
With the four-player adaptor being worked on, this maze/arcade game should be a real cracker.

Cal Ripkin Baseball – Mindscape
Baseball is popular on the Mega Drive at the mo. Let's hope this has something new to offer.

Chessmaster – Mindscape
It's chess, it's on the Mega Drive and now wake up at the back.

Chester Cheetah – Kaneko
This game is looking very weird. Guide Chester in search of his fave brand of crisps.

Hook (CD) – Sony
Hopefully this CD game'll feature stills and animation from the film.

Sewer Shark (CD) – Sony
Screenshots from the film look stunning. The game is your average shoot-'em-up though.

Flintstones
Fred's off on his travels again, with only his trusty club to fend off attackers.

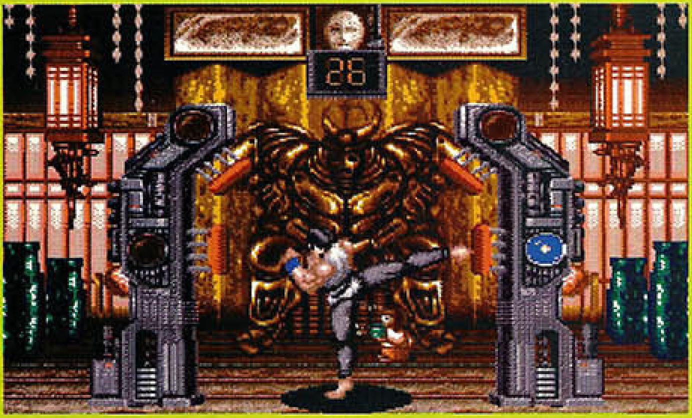
Romance Of The Three Kingdoms 2 – Koei
Take control of China in this RPG adventure.

Breach – Treco
Another strategy game, this time set in the future of ultra-modern warships.

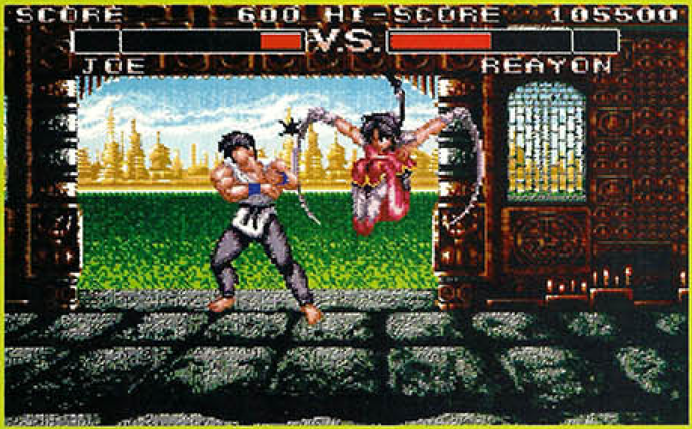
Sorcerer's Kingdom – Treco
More strategy action from these guys, this time it's all cute and fluffy – just what we need.

POWER ATHLETE

Kaneco • Out now (import)



This is the first bonus stage. Whenever one of the indicators lights up (like that one on the right) Joe has to kick the accompanying pad. You have only about a second to do it though, so Joe has to be very nimble



She's an agile young thing, isn't she? Apart from this swoopy-type move, she also does a swift flashing kick, which isn't entirely dissimilar to Chun Li's in Streetfighter 2. This woman's nowhere near as hard though

MEGA takes a look at a game that could well have been cloned from *Streetfighter 2*. But has the perfect gameplay been duplicated?

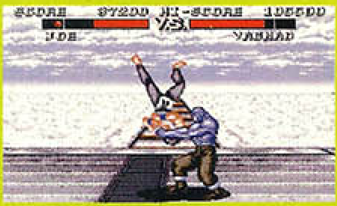
Do the screenshots of this game look ever so vaguely familiar? You've seen it all somewhere before, but can't quite put your finger on what's wrong? Well, *Power Athlete* is a very obvious rip-off of *Streetfighter 2*. The characters all look different and their names are different, but in essence, the style of the game is the same.

You play a guy called Joe, who has to battle his way through seven opponents of varying strength and ability. As each opponent falls by the wayside, Joe's own strengths are increased. This wasn't the case in *Streetfighter 2* and to be honest this is a strange way of doing things, because while the opponents are supposed to get stronger and thus trickier to beat, you also get stronger, so the game doesn't actually get very much more difficult. However, having said that, there are loads of difficulty levels so that may make up for things a bit. After you've defeated a few of your foes you enter a bonus stage, which involves punching a series of pads whenever the little light that's situated next to them light up. There's another bonus stage too, in which our hero has to kick flying bombs before they hit the floor and explode. Again, these bonus stages are very obviously based on those in *Streetfighter 2*, but sadly they're not half as much fun.

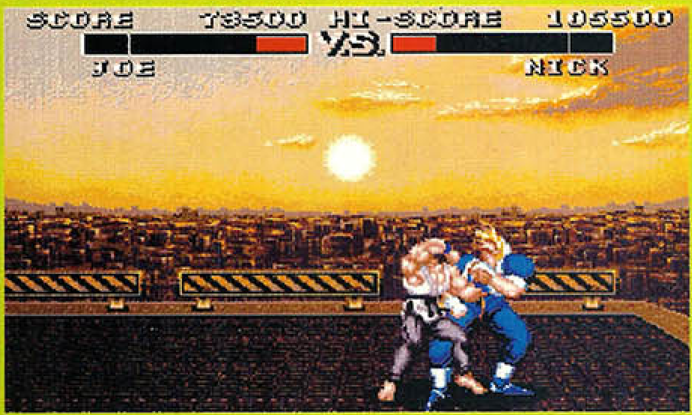
Power Athlete falls way short of *SF2*

Initially, the range of moves at your disposal seems limited, but as you play, you discover more and more little "tricks" with which to hammer your opponents. All very useful, but from what we've seen so far it's fairly easy to plough through the game using only a couple of moves. The enemies have lots of manoeuvres to use against Joe, many of which are strikingly similar to those in *Streetfighter 2*.

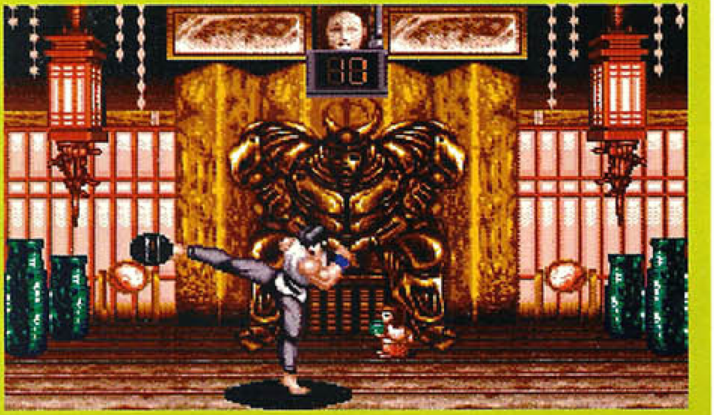
Just to give you an idea of how close it is, four of the seven opponents are recognisable as being characters from *Streetfighter 2*. Warren is like E Honda, Reayon is like Chun Li, Vagnad is like Zangief and Baraki is so Blanka-like you'll fall off your chair. However, it doesn't matter how similar the games are visually and in style, at the end of the day it all comes down to gameplay and at this stage it looks like *Power Athlete* falls way short of the near-perfect gameplay in *Streetfighter 2*. To find out for sure, you'll have to read the full review of *Power Athlete* in next month's issue of MEGA.



"Oh lord, I'm not sure I like this too much!" exclaims Joe before spilling his brains all over the floor



Nick's a right old ponce. When he defeats you he strikes a very swashbuckling Erroll Flynn-type pose. Cocky git. Give him a thumping

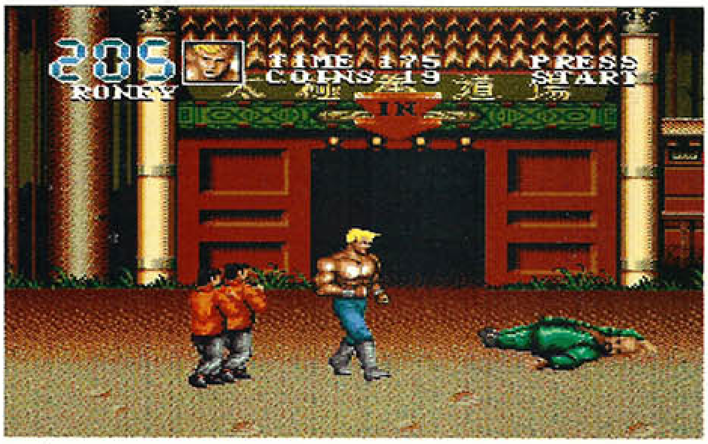


The second bonus stage. This time you have to kick those falling bombs before they land and explode. It's very slow and very, very boring

DOUBLE DRAGON 3

Ballistic • March

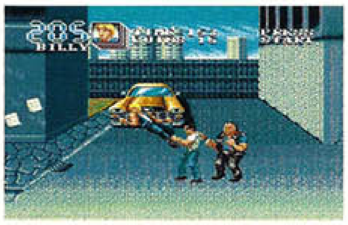
Time to wheel out those old duffers Billy and Jimmy again. But will things be better this time?



Having decked Mr Greensuit, our hero tries to run away from the dreaded Siamese twins. Er, that's just about covered this screenshot, hasn't it?

Does anybody out there remember *Double Dragon* on the Mega Drive? No, probably not. And that's because it was quite possibly one of the most appalling games ever to be written. It was based on an ancient coin-op and it was dull and unplayable.

Anyway, it seems Flying Edge are trying to make amends by giving us the all new, singing and dancing sequel, *Double Dragon 3* (*DD2* was out only on Japanese import by the way and was, um, crap). So what's changed? At first sight, quite a bit it would appear. Billy and Jimmy (the "not really all that impressive" heroes) have to travel around the face of the planet visiting various countries and fighting the weirdos therein. There is a sort of logic here, in that you meet Samurai in Japan, karate champs in China and so on, but as in *Double Dragon*, there isn't very much variety in the opponents you have to fight.

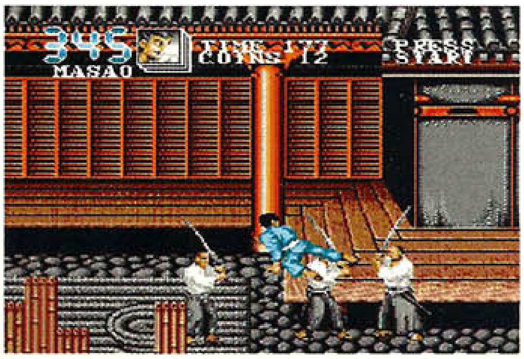


Oh bravo Billy. He's just successfully managed to get slaughtered. Ha!

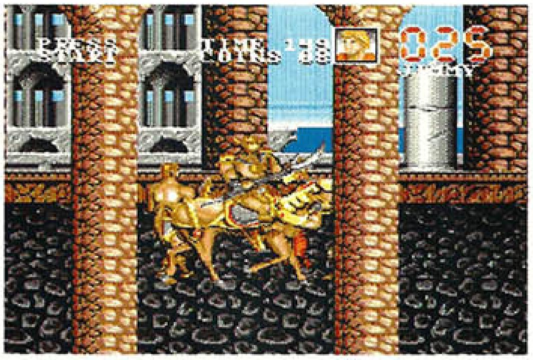
The graphics are more elaborate than those in the previous game too, although that's not necessarily a compliment, because the visuals couldn't possibly have been any worse. There's also an Egyptian level in the game and the reason I'm mentioning this one specifically is because this is where the most obvious improvement appears. There are a couple of secret bonus rooms to discover, and puzzles to solve therein. This makes a change from *Double Dragon*, which simply involved beating someone up then fighting the guardian before doing it all again on the next tedious level. Another spiced-up option option, at the start of each stage, to hire different characters to help you out. There are three to choose from, Roney (er, a big bloke), Seimo (er, another big bloke) and Masao (er, not-so-big-but-good-in-a-scrap bloke).

Hire big guys to help you out

Double Dragon 3 is most certainly an improvement over its predecessor, but to be honest, it doesn't look like it's going to put up much of a challenge.



After being awoken from a sleep, Masao takes on these bendy stick-wielding thugs, in his turquoise jim-jams



We'd like to be able to show you the new-look Jimmy, but he's being obscured by this rather crap-looking horse

UP 'N' COMING...

Metal Fang – JVC
A decent overhead racing game that gives you wicked power-ups. Er, that's it!

Keeper Of the Gates – Razorsoft
Gory platform action and it is in fact the sequel to *Stormlord*. Exciting stuff huh?

Monopoly – Parker Brothers
Right, I'll buy Mayfair and a hotel. Rivetting stuff this Monopoly, eh?

Uncharted Waters – Koei
It's marine simulation time. Keep your business above water (ha) and honour your family name.

Ninja Gaiden – Sega
This ninja game has been on loads of formats and now makes its way over to the Mega Drive.

Drive Junkers High – Sims
Take *Chase HQ*, add 400 years of car evolution, add some power ups, and go for it.

Land Stalker – Sega
You can buy this now on Jap import, but we advise you to wait for the official or US release.

Dark Wizard (CD)
Another CD RPG, with some astounding music and a very long intro sequence with real actors.

Power Wrestler (Deadly Moves – USA) – Kaneko
A one-on-one beat-'em-up which could be good. But is it really up to *Streetfighter 2*?

American Gladiators – GameTek
More joypad-bashing and finger-swelling action tied into the cult American TV show.

Hook – Sony Imagesoft
The cart version of this game won't be as nice as the CD game, but it's not looking too bad.

King's Quest 5 (CD) – Sierra
Help King Graham fight the forces of evil. Nice looking and very atmospheric.

The Third World War (CD) – Bignet
Fancy trying to stop WWIII? Well check out this very intense strategy game then.

Trouble Shooter – Vic Tokai
The same game as *Battle Mania*, but slightly tweaked for the American market.

Boogy Woogy Bowling – Viscon
Ten-pin bowling on your Mega Drive. What sport are they going to convert next – curling?

Dungeon Master: Skull Keep (CD) – JVC
The classic interactive, atmospheric RPG, that should be a stunner on the CD.

Hit The Ice – Taito
Coin-op ice-hockey. Not a serious *NHLPA Hockey* rival, just a good laugh.

Police Quest 3 (CD) – Sierra
Truth, justice and the American way. Save them all in your quest for evidence.

Space Quest 4 (CD) – Sierra
Search through the realms of time and space to rid the universe of evil beings.

Stellar 7 (CD) – Sierra
More space romping role-playing interaction with astounding graphics and sound.

Amazing Tennis – Absolute
A strange viewpoint – standing behind your character – but this could be quite good fun.

Chuck Rock (CD) – Sony
Chuck's back and he's on the CD. But we wonder how different the game is going to be.

Roger Clemens – Flying Edge
More baseball action. This is getting really silly. Try a different sport for God's sake.

Humans – GameTek
Previewed last issue, this *Lemmings*-alike is going to take some serious head-scratching.

Jeopardy – GameTek
More TV Quiz show questions from the same guys who brought you *Wheel of Fortune*. Say no more...

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This month, two very famous celebrities are writing this page for us. Welcome to Ronnie and Reggie Kray...

Cue the lads: "Look Ron, what 'ave we 'ere? Looks like we've 'appened across some sort of reviews intro page." "Yeah Reg, and you know what they say about reviews intro pages, dontcha?" "Oh yes." "Yes, apparently they're done by a load of West End ponces, who'd rather turn you over to the filth as look at ya. And we don't take kindly to that, do we Reg?" "No... we don't. We'd better do it ourselves then. After you Ron."

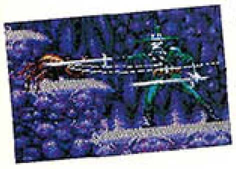
Find the secret of the islands

MONKEY ISLAND

"This'll be one of them CD games then. Mind you, in my day, the way to 'ave a laugh wuz wiv a length of steel and a few gentle words of 'persuasion'. And what's all this Pirate crap? Nah, I'd rather rough up a few shopkeepers than mess around with this adventure rubbish. What d'you reckon Reg?"

ECCO

"I'm right wiv ya there son. I mean, take a look at this *Ecco* game. I've spent more nights in chokey than this dolphin geezers 'ad hot tuna. I reckon a few minutes with you, me, and a piece of lead piping would make this fishy pratt see the, 'ow shall I put it, error of his ways."



CHAKAN

"And who does this forever bloke think he is? Know what Reg? I think we ought to send a couple of the boys around and show 'im just how mortal he bloody well is. Yeah, that's right, let's do 'im."

Help Chakan to rest in peace

ARIEL

"Yeah, then we can settle down wiv *Ariel* and a nice 'ot cup of tea, and some Bourbon biscu..." "No Reg, no, that's enough."

Ariel also takes to the water

MARCH

Monkey Island 30
Chakan 34
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Tale Spin 50
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RATINGS

This is how we all cobble together the ratings.

How many players can take part in the game at any one time?

SKILL! Skill levels? Yes, we like those. Here we tell you how many there are

How many lives you are given, and how many continues

A game with this icon has a password system

Even better, a game with this icon comes with battery back-up

Stages? *Mega-Lo-Mania*'s got 27, but *NHLPA Hockey* hasn't got any

Import carts are shown with one of these logos, from America or Japan

GRAPHICS 7

●●●●●●●●●●

Five game components are rated individually out of ten. Here's what we look for in each:

GRAPHICS: Clear presentation, animation, scrolling, collision-detection, design, speed

SOUND: Music, FX, samples and speech

GAMEPLAY: Movement, control mechanism, difficulty, challenge design and fun element

GAME SIZE: How much does the game offer? Are the levels big? Is there a league option?

ADDICTION: Er, is it addictive?

"What we think of the game, be it positive or negative"

WHO'S WHO?

NEIL WEST

In honour of our Kray page, the MEGA team were asked how close they've ever come to being 'banged up'. "I threw a party at my flat," says Neil, "and there were roadworks outside. Once everyone was drunk, 12 flashing bollards and a traffic light were brought inside to decorate the lounge. This makeshift disco was all very amusing until we realised the folly of it and quickly rushed the stuff back outside, minutes before the peelers arrived."

ANDY DYER

"Me and a friend wandered out of a pub and down a country lane with pints of Guinness in our hands. The Rozzers picked us up and informed us that a stolen car had been dumped in that very lane. We sat in the police car and my friend was particularly perturbed by the fact that only a few days previously he'd committed a speeding offence in his car. Needless to say, they let us go after realising we were not, in fact, hardened criminals, but sad berks."

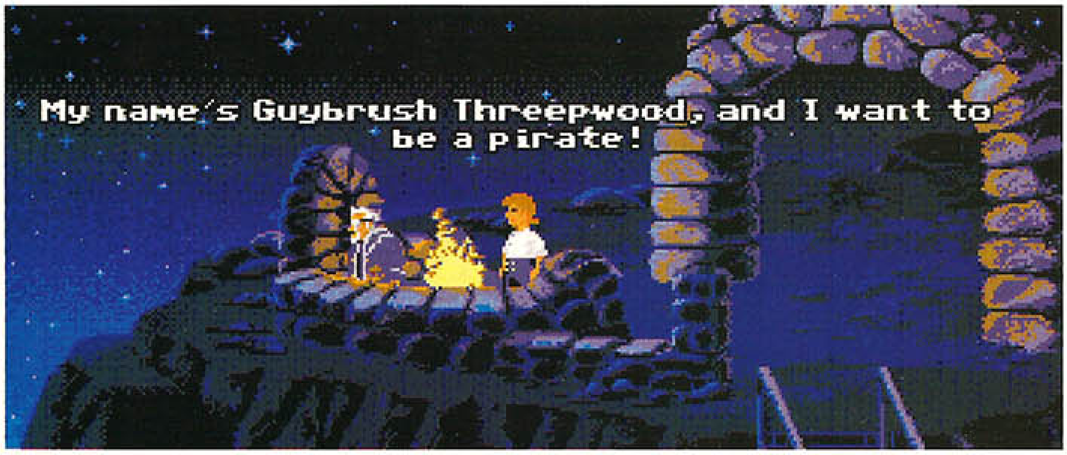
PAUL MELLERICK

"Oh, um, I don't know really. Erm, I can't really recall ever having done anything that would be termed crimin... Oh yes, I remember once when I'd had a bit too much to drink, I killed the entire staff of the office I was working in at the time. I was very careful though, and never got caught." At this point, the MEGA team removed the bottle of Grolsch from Paul's hand, crept quietly out of the office, and locked the door behind them.

AMANDA DYSON

In all her life, Amanda has never really come close to being thrown in the local nick (or so she says anyway). Although, she informs us, that she's been in a police station loads of times because her Uncle's one (a policeman that is, not a police station). So then Amanda, you've never been picked up by the fuzz? "No," she replies earnestly, "but I have been swung around by the... (snip!)

THE SECRET MONKEY IS


My name's Guybrush Threepwood, and I want to be a pirate!

Who needs plot-setting novellas and loads of guff like that, eh? Everything is here, just in this one grab

Guybrush Threepwood has a problem. Well, several problems, actually, not least of which is being lumbered with a stupid name that no-one can remember. But biggest among Guybrush's problems is his career anxiety. Like many a young man just out of school, he doesn't really know what to do with his life. Working in McDonalds doesn't really appeal, he's too thick for university, and a life down t'pit seems to have a limited future. There is one thing he'd like though, and that's to be a pirate.

PIRATE APPROVAL

Now that might seem like a slightly pie-in-the-sky dream to most of you, but Guybrush is lucky. Y'see, he just happens to live in the middle of an island that's simply heaving with the scurvy seafaring knaves. So one fine evening he takes himself down to the local boozer and presents himself to the most important-looking pirate dudes he can find. "Gissa job," is what he says...

Sadly, as most of us already know, life isn't that simple. "You don't become a pirate just by asking," says one of the pirates mockingly to the eager young would-be apprentice, but his laughter is interrupted by a couple of pirate chums pointing out something of a manpower shortage in the Department Of Skullduggery, and it's at this point that Guybrush finds himself on a kind of piracy youth training scheme.

The three pirates set him three tasks, the successful completion of which will prove him fit for a life in a three-cornered hat and a suspect beard. Fired with

Since that time, Algo has prospered under the care of a giant computer called the Mother Brain.

Here we go, the start of a typical RPG game. Now *some* people...

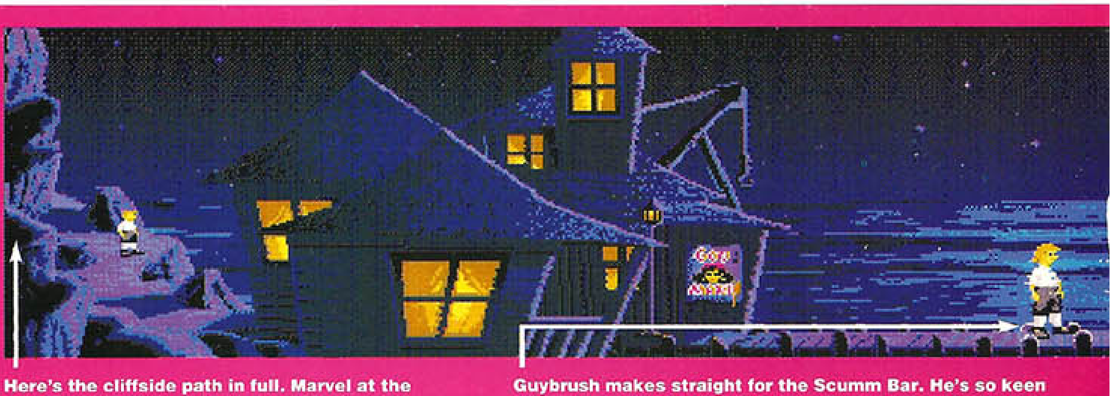
... think that wandering around like this is fun. Which it can be, *but*...

ITEM
STATE
TECH
STRNG
EQP
LV 1 NEI
NO JOB
EXP 0
HP 12/ 12
TP 10/ 10
HEAD RIBBON
RGHT
LEFT
BODY CARBONVEST
LEGS SANDALS
STRNGTH 14
MENTAL 18
AGILITY 30
LUCK 10
DEXTRTY 14
ATTACK 7
DEFENSE 22

... nowhere near as much fun as *The Secret Of Monzkey Island.* Trust us

THE INTRO SEQUENCE: "WHEREVER MELEE MY HAT, THAT'S MY HOME"

Guybrush's adventure begins on a lonely clifftop, but it doesn't take long before he's right in the middle of the action on bustling Melee Island. It's a short intro sequence which sees him strolling down the cliffside path to the Scumm Bar, a charming dockside handout where he can spend many a happy hour in the company of cheerful hard-working artisans.

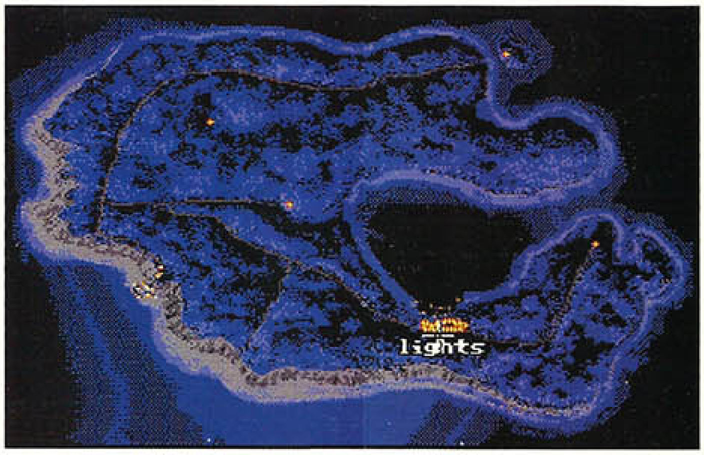


Here's the cliffside path in full. Marvel at the stunning 3D effects as Guybrush walks down the path towards the Scumm Bar and, er, gets bigger as he descends

Guybrush makes straight for the Scumm Bar. He's so keen to get there that he strolls right past this fascinating and affordable beachside mansion displaying a campaign poster for the imminent elections for a new Governor. A clue...?

OF LAND

Adventure games have a reputation for being boring, long-winded slogs; all hearty dwarves, woven cloaks, magical goats, bewitched turnips and stuff. Not this one – with more laughs than an issue of MEGA, Neil West gets up to some monkey business...



Melee Island in full. Here we see, er, the lights. Just like Blackpool really

burning ambition and an overpowering sense of purpose, Guybrush strides manfully out of the tavern and into the biggest adventure of his young life.

So, enough waffle already. Let's talk game. Fairly clearly, there are two sorts of people reading this review, those of you with Amigas or Amiga-owning chums, who've seen this before, and *Monkey Island* virgins. We'll deal with the first group first.

NO FUMBLING ABOUT

If you've seen *Monkey Island* before, this is exactly the same game, but with better music, and without all of the horrible faffing around with different floppy disks and eternity-long gaps for them to load in bits of code. Mind you, it is slightly slower in play, and the accessing gaps are actually still present, it's just that they're from CD instead of floppy, and they're not as long. Make no mistake, though, as someone used to Mega Drive software, you're still going to have a little bit of an uncomfortable time getting the hang of waiting around

Turn over

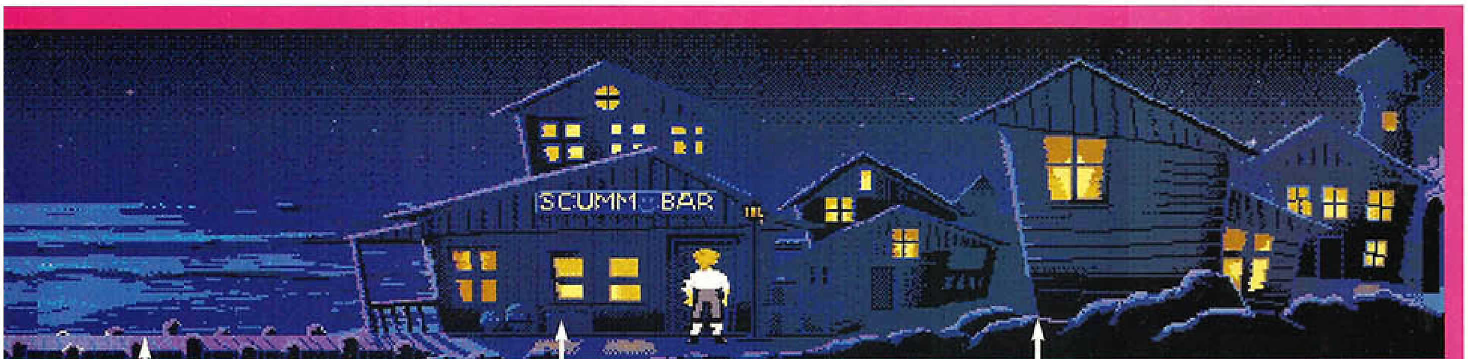
HANG ON! WHAT'S THIS ADVENTURE BUSINESS? WELL THEN, HERE'S A BRIEF HISTORY...

Now, fact of the matter is, many of you won't ever have seen a game like this before in your lives. In all our times on various Sega mags, none of us have ever reviewed anything like this before (although we've played some on other formats), so let's just take a minute to explain to you just what exactly an "adventure" game is.

Adventure games were among the very first computer games. The earliest ones were written on huge mainframe computers, and consisted entirely of text. The first and most famous was known as the Colossal Cave adventure, and is available to this day in one form or another on most of the home computers. You wandered through the game land by typing things like "Go North", "Open Door", "Kill Goblin" and all that kind of stuff on a keyboard, and the object was to solve riddles, negotiate mazes and work out puzzles. Later, as home computers became fashionable, adventures grew up a bit and started to feature graphics. They were almost always static shots, though, used simply to illustrate chosen locations throughout the game, and the actual gameplay was still all about typing and puzzle solving.

Fairly recently, adventures changed again. Games on the ST and Amiga like *Future Wars* and *Operation Stealth* ushered in an era of adventures with no typing at all – the whole thing operated by way of a "point-and-click" interface, where simply aiming a cursor at something on screen would make your character walk up to it, or clicking on a "pick up" icon on a menu bar and then pointing at an object would pick it up for you without any of that boring old keyboardy stuff. While the actual games were more or less identical (well sometimes they were – sometimes designers would just use the format as an excuse to turn the thing into something more like an interactive movie), they were a lot friendlier to play, and you didn't have to spend all your time working out which words the computer understood – you just chose options from the ones the computer presented to you.

Of course, some purists complained that this took half the fun out of things and turned adventures into simple multiple-choice guessing games (which, interestingly enough, had been a popular genre on its own in the earlier days of 8-bit machines like the Spectrum, with titles like *Danger Mouse In The Black Forest Chateau* giving the player a set number of options to choose from at particular points in the game), but the user-friendly style caught on. It has to be said that there's something in the argument, as this style of game gives you a lot less freedom to tackle the problems in whatever way you see fit (which for many people is the whole point of adventures in the first place), but each to their own, eh? Anyway, the genre soon spawned a game from Lucasfilm called *The Secret Of Monkey Island*. And here it is.



This is a rickety bridge. It's the sort of bridge under which you'd expect to find a troll and above which you'd expect to see three billy-goats gruff attempting to cross it. No such plot in this game

The Scumm Bar. This is where you'll begin to really get into the game (if you're at all sensible). Watch out for the pirate dog, who can help you out if you speak his language

This is the path to the main town, where all kinds of further fun and larks await you. You'll be seeing plenty more of the Scumm Bar, though, don't you worry...

This is the path to the governor's mansion. Careful you don't fall off

The governor's mansion itself, diligently guarded by piranha poodles

twiddling your thumbs for ages while the game amuses itself with clever technical stuff. But hey, this is the bit of the review for people who know *Monkey Island* already, so let's forget about disk accessing for now. The upshot of everything is, for *Monkey Island* fans this is a dream come true. You can skip straight to the percentage box now, thanks. Bye. OK, who's next?

FIRST TIMERS

Oh yeah, that big gang of *Monkey Island* virgins. Right, well, first off, why don't all you MIVvies (as I'm playfully going to call you) go and take a look at the box on page 31, which contains a brief history of the adventure game as a concept, then come back? I'll just kill some time while you're away, you won't miss anything.

(Tum te tum, whistle, etc.) Ah, you're back. Right. *Monkey Island* is an adventure game. However, it's not like most other adventure games. Most other adventure games have ridiculously crap plots about dwarves and elves and magical kingdoms and sorcerors and stuff, but *Monkey Island* is different.

The puzzle element is similar – in order to get past a certain obstacle, bribe someone you meet or navigate a tricky journey you'll need to use all your powers of lateral thinking and deduction to work out how you can utilise whatever objects you may have found along the way. You may find yourself in need of money – what do you do? You can try stealing it, finding it or walking into a

> **You feel almost as if you're taking part in a film**

GET A GRIP!

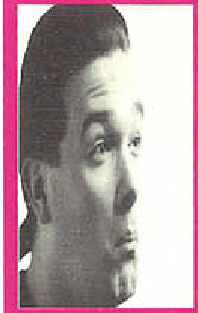
↑ ↓ ← → Moves cursor around the screen

Ⓐ Press this to automatically select highlighted option

Ⓑ Use this button to select one of the ordinary options

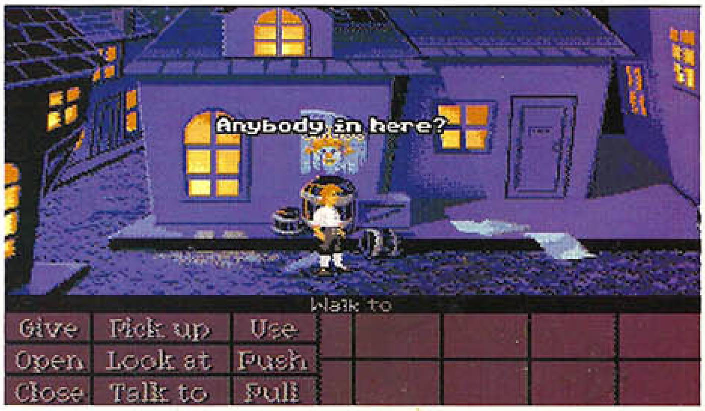
Ⓒ Press this to interrupts dialogue sequences

NOT SO FAST... I WANT MY SAY

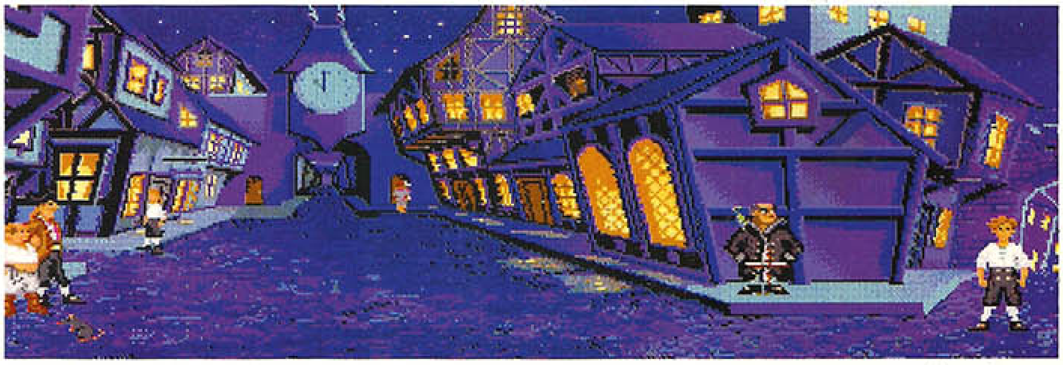


Well, it's finally arrived. The *Secret of Monkey Island* is one of the Mega CD games we've all been waiting for, primarily because it's the CD game of the most popular adventure game ever. It's all very funny and everything, but I don't actually see all that much game in here. You spend a vast amount of time watching the game go through set, interminable, uninterruptible (well, you CAN interrupt them, but then you probably won't have a clue what's going on) dialogue sequences, a moderately vast amount of time waiting for it to load data in off the CD, and a comparatively tiny amount of time actually bringing any influence to bear on the proceedings. Even when you do get to play the game, it's a lot of guessing between set responses, and I for one never feel all that involved. But it *is* funny, and everyone else disagrees with me anyway, so never mind, eh? Just thought I'd get my bit in, seeing as the game's finally arrived.

Paul Mellerick



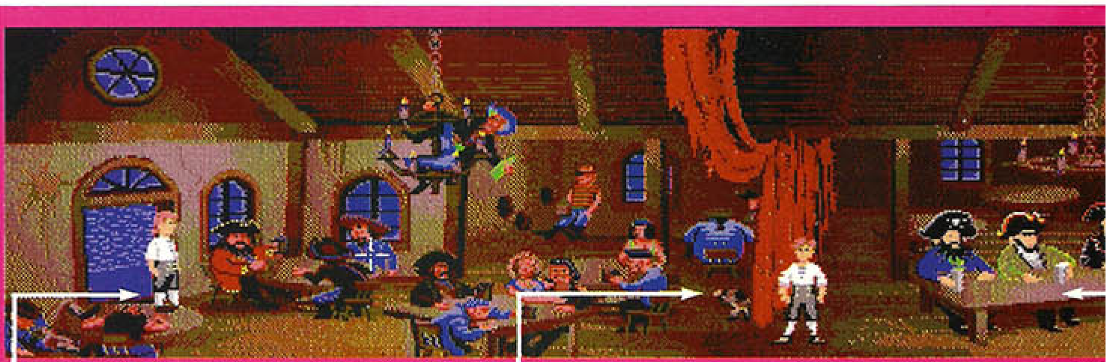
Guybrush foolhardily ventures down a dark and creepy alleyway late at night. You should be extra careful when speaking to anyone you meet in a place like this. (In the game too.)



This is the town's main street. All human life is here, from men trying to sell you tourist maps to gangs of, er, pirates. Oh yeah, and there's a rat too. I like rats. Don't forget to have a good root around behind the multitude of doors though

HURRY UP GUYBRUSH, COME ON (WE'RE GOING DOWN THE PUB. ER, OI!)

A bit like the Tardis, the Scumm Bar is much bigger inside than it appears from the outside. It's full of people in funny hats drinking grog, but that's the only way in which it resembles the MEGA office. Otherwise it's a smelly, dingy, generally unpleasant hole. Hmm. Actually, come to think of it... (etc)



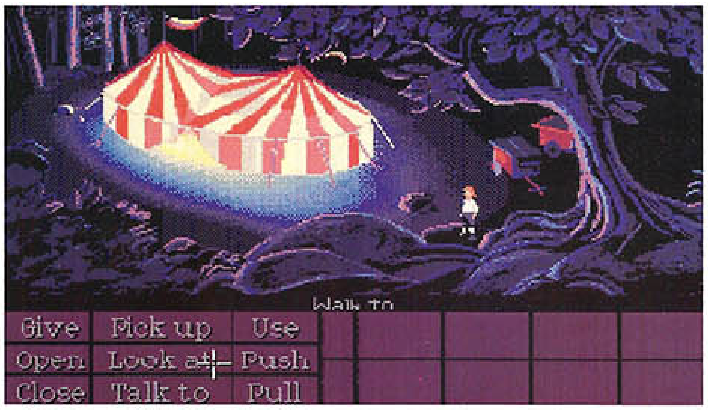
Guybrush's first attempt to communicate with one of the pirates was thwarted when the Predator appeared and lined up his sights on a target...

By the curtain, we find the famous Scumm Bar dog. Guybrush can talk to him, and if you're really really clever, you can ascertain the odd clue from what he says. Er, woof!

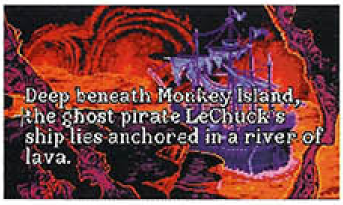
AVAILABILITY

The version of *The Secret Of Monkey Island* reviewed here is an American version for use in the USA only – don't try getting hold of a copy yet, because it won't work with a Mega CD set-up in the UK.

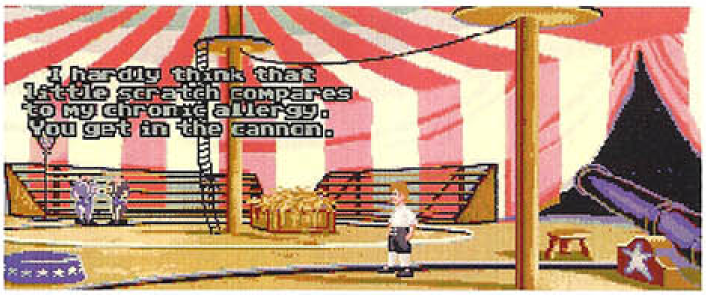
But this is one of the games which is hotly tipped to be spear-heading the Mega CD's games attack in the spring, and so is well worth looking out for then. So take this review as a taste of what's to come and an indication of what the Mega CD is *really* capable of.



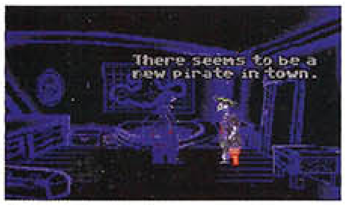
Mysteriously hidden away in the middle of a dark and creepy forest, you'll find this big circus tent. What could there be inside?


Deep beneath Monkey Island, the ghost pirate LeChuck's ship lies anchored in a river of lava.

Ooh blimey, look, it's another really creepy bit. How can you anchor something in lava, though? It'd melt.


I hardly think that little scratch compares to my chronic allergy. You get in the cannon.

Ah. Two guys, one big cannon, and a vacancy for a cannonball. I'd get back out again pretty sharpish if I were you



Guybrush's reputation clearly precedes him. A pirate, eh?

travelling circus and asking for a job. You get the picture?

But there's a big difference between *The Secret Of Monkey Island* and the usual adventure game. *Monkey Island* is funny. Not just occasionally funny or incidentally funny, but repeatedly and extremely funny, all the way through. In fact, it wouldn't be far off the mark to suggest that *Monkey Island's* entire raison d'être is funniness – much of the time, the whole plot seems to be nothing more than an elaborate run-up to a punchline, and it's all the better for it.

Monkey Island's raison d'être is comedy

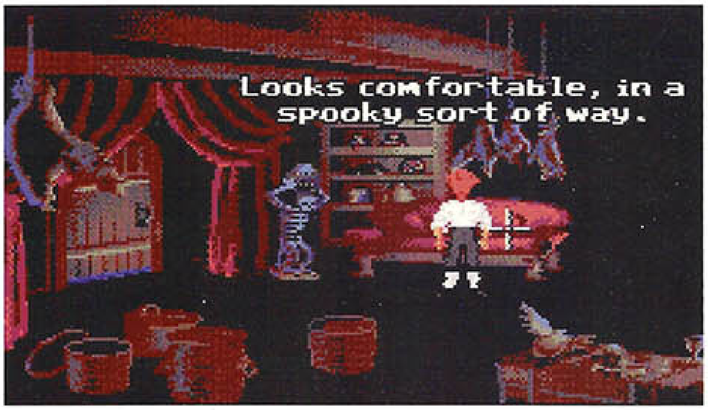
As Guybrush Threepwood's quest unfolds, the poor chap trades insults with his enemies, he's fired from a gun as a human cannonball, he gets drunk, visits the "Rubber Chicken With A Pulley In The Middle Shop" – and, oh dear, it doesn't *sound* very funny does it? You'll just have to take our word for it – *The Secret Of Monkey Island* is funnier than MEGA will ever hope to be.

Y'see, it makes it feel almost like you're taking part in a film, except that you get the chance to choose your own lines. Playing *Monkey Island*, you'll get a choice of several lines of dialogue to use when talking to other characters, and even though you more or less know which is the right one to get you through the game, you find yourself deliberately saying the wrong ones just to see what kind of responses you get.

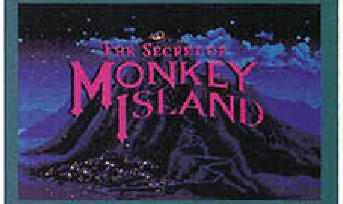
The urge to go for the laugh line is an illustration of just how involved you get when you play this. You can really identify with Guybrush, and that's something that, much of the time, even *Sonic* or *John Madden* can't lay claim to. Many computer magazines have called this the greatest computer game of all time, and they could be right. What it certainly is, is the best use anyone's yet made of the Mega CD, and if you're one of the machine's much-abused owners, it's all but unmissable.

® ***Neil West***

Three important-looking pirates. And a fire. And the door to the kitchen. And (can I go yet?)



Does everything on Melee Island look spooky, or what? Guybrush, it's just a sofa. Get (as they say) a grip!



PUBLISHER: JVC USA

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: June

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Your local Importer

There is, in a real sense, only one Guybrush Threepwood

Just the one level of skill

Just one life, but you don't really die as such

There is a passcode system

Just the one bleedin' great big one

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 9

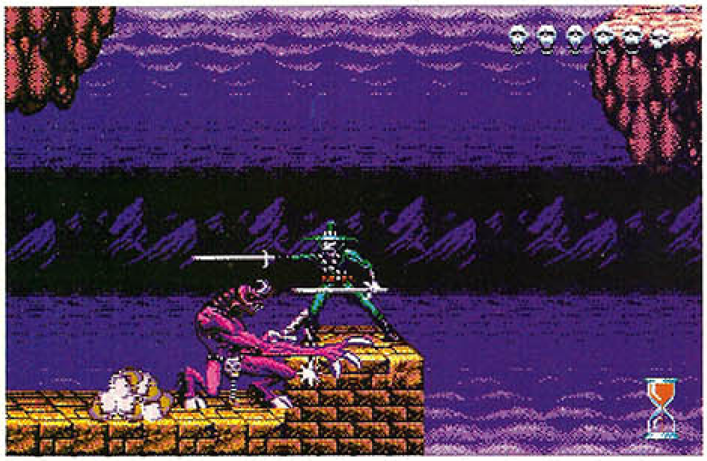
GAMEPLAY 6

GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 8

"Possibly the most popular computer game of all-time, and now you can play it on your Mega Drive with none of that tedious crappy disk-swapping malarkey. A triumph"

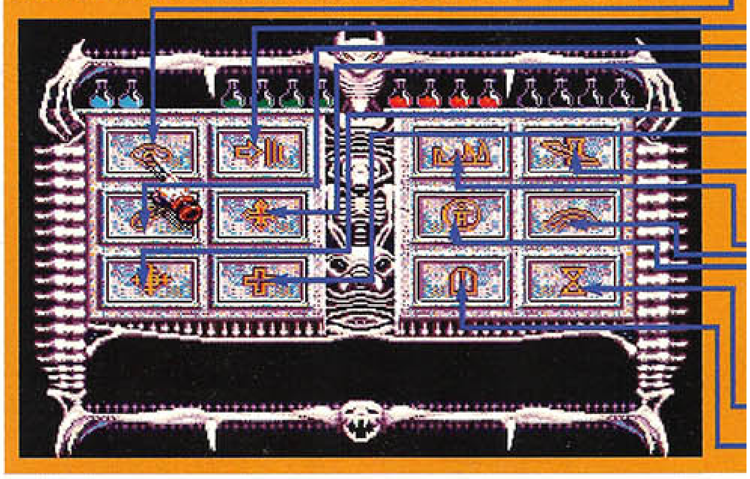
91 PERCENT



Chakan tries to bestow a knighthood on this purple pant soiler when, in fact, his best bet would be to slaughter the foul creature instead

CHAKAN-OOGA-CHOO-CHOO

That heading has absolutely nothing to do with this box-out, but I couldn't resist the joke. No, this little bit shows you which spells our immortal hero has at his disposal (once he's collected the potions)



CHAKAN

Andy Dyer sympathises with Chakan. He too sold his soul to the devil, but not for immortality or anything flash like that. It was for a pint of Fosters. Berk!

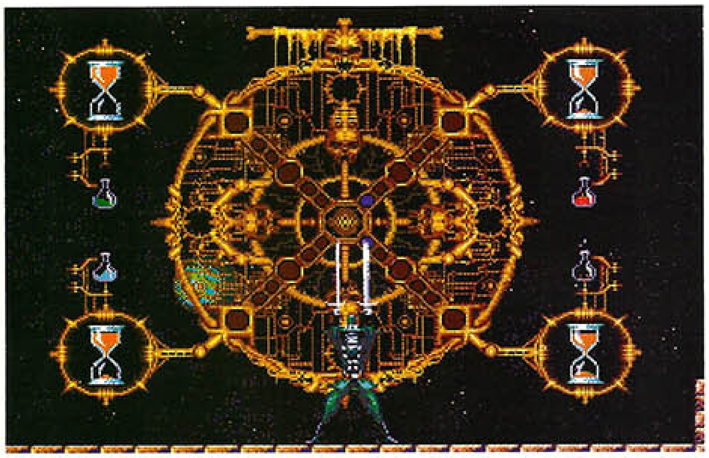
Chakan is a bit of a boob. A mighty warrior he may be, but when challenged to a duel by Death, he accepted, won, then lost his soul and was sentenced to roam the land racked with the pain of countless sinners, killing evil creatures as he went. And, the story goes, that only when all the world's evil creatures were dead could he die peacefully. Bit of a raw deal really, wasn't it?

But Chakan's loss is our gain, and his sorry little tale of misery has given us quite a smart variant on the *Shinobi* style of platformer. At the start of the game, Chakan's armoury consists of only two swords. However, as he travels around the levels he finds a variety of flasks, which will enable him to access a whole range of spells. These spells allow him to do almost anything. They allow him to become invisible or they can simply be used to top up his energy levels. He can also charge up his swords to make them effective against enemies who he previously couldn't harm.

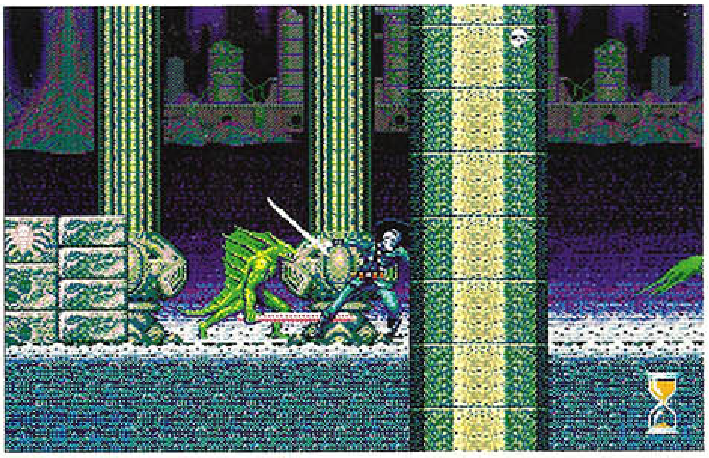
If you enter the options screen at the beginning of the game, you can select one of three skill levels: normal and hard speak for themselves, but enter the practice level and everything's the same except Chakan has infinite flasks and thus all the spells at his disposal. In this way you can learn what everything does before you actually attempt to play the game properly.

We're looking at a hefty challenge

So once you've become fully versed in the mystic art of "killing stuff", it's onto the real challenge. There's one main level in the game which contains no foes whatsoever. It does, however, contain four portals, which lead to the four realms of earth, air, fire and water. These are the places which need cleaning up, so what Chakan needs to do is enter each door, finish the level contained therein and collect the weapon at the end of it. Once this is done he can re-enter the portals to find a new set of levels. This is the way the game continues for a massive 24 levels. And when I tell you that these levels are by no means small, or

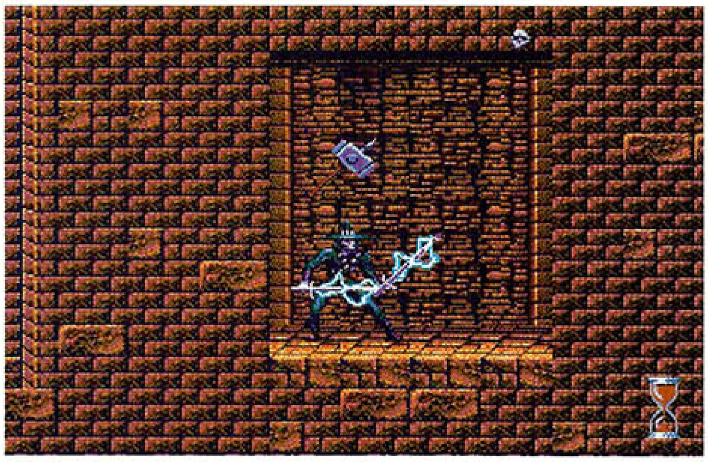


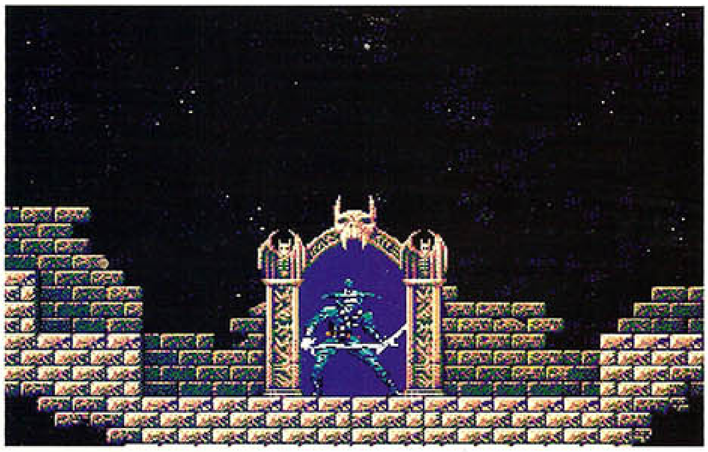
This is what's technically known as a "bloody great big elaborate thing". The blue dots in the middle show that you've completed two of the levels



This lizardman tells Chakan a gag, and our hero laughs hysterically for the next 12 months. Lizardmen are well known for their excellent jokes

- Cast this spell and you become both invisible and invincible
- This little spell slows down your enemies
- Gives you a blue lightning air sword (a more powerful weapon in other words)
- Hurl bombs by selecting this thingy
- Turns your sword into the Cold Fire sword
- Restores your energy to full
- Gives you a really high jump
- Turns your sword into an orange fiery one
- Gives you a green lightning sword
- Shields you from the enemy
- Reverses the hour glass
- Creates passageways


At the end of each level you'll find a weapon. Collect it, and that's the level finished. You can now also use this weapon on any of the other levels


This is one of four portals which lead to the realms of earth, air, fire and water. Re-entering the portals takes you on to further levels

GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Left, right and crouch, simple
Ⓐ Cycles through the collected weapons so you can select a new one
Ⓑ Use this button when you want to attack your opponents
Ⓒ This makes Chakan jump. Press twice for the double jump

easy, you'll begin to realise that we're looking at a pretty hefty challenge

PLEASING PLAYABILITY

But challenge alone is not enough, so it comes as a bit of a relief to discover that there's plenty of playability here too. The control mechanism is very similar to that used in the *Shinobi* series of games. Chakan can crouch, jump and wave his dual swords around pretty well, but with a bit of deft joypad pushing you can also make him do a double jump for extra height, attack in mid air, and roll along the floor.

One criticism of the game is that it plays a little slowly. Chakan moves very nicely, but he does tend to amble around the place. Mind you, being immortal I guess he's got all the time in the world. However, if he loses a life, he gets sent right back to the beginning of the level and that's when the game's sluggishness becomes a bit of a nightmare.

Another minor problem is that although many of the enemies are only a few sword swings away from death, some take absolutely ages to kill. This wouldn't be a problem, but there are no real tactics you can employ to duff them up, it's just a case of bashing away at them until they're dead.

Chakan isn't the busiest game in the world, and things can get a bit repetitive, but the advantage this game has is atmosphere, and lots of it. The scenery is very eerie and foreboding and the creatures that inhabit this strange world are all very different and nicely drawn. *Chakan* is not a classic, it's nothing really new, but what it does, it does with style and slickness.

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*

These slugs tell Chakan a gag, and again he laughs heartily. Slug people are almost as funny as lizardmen

It's been one of those days really. All the monks said was, "My dog's got no nose" and Chakan was helpless

PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

There's only one Chakan, one Chakan, one Chaaaakaaaaan!

Three skill levels: practice (well worth doing), normal and hard!

You would appear to have infinite lives

No battery back-up or passwords. You have to do it all in one go!

24 levels in all. Yes, this one's a biggie!

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	7
GAME SIZE	8
ADDICTION	7

> **"A good-looking and atmospheric game. Very like the *Shinobi* games but, er, a bit better. Try it!"**

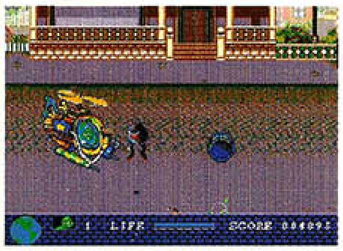
84 PERCENT

TOXIC CRUSADERS

Are you ready to take on the Smogulans? Paul Mellerick thinks he is, he just wishes the game was a little less slimy!

You may or may not have heard of the Toxic Crusaders. They were conceived in what was originally thought to be a very poor film from a company called Troma. The film soon turned out to be a cult classic and then spawned a cartoon series. And so, in traditional Mega Drive manner, we've now got the game of the cartoon of the film.

The Smogulans have broken through the Earth's ozone layer (they must have found that small hole the size of North America then) and are attacking us. We need a Pollution Warrior... no sorry, a Slimy Saviour... er, how about a Toxic Crusader? Yes, that's the one.



Hit the helicopter enough times and when it lands, you can climb in and cause some real havoc

CHOICE OF CRUSADERS

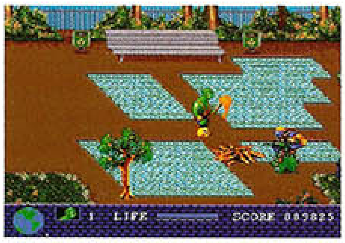
However, Toxie (as he's known) is not alone. He has two friends (NoZone and Junkyard), who are more than willing to die for their planet. You can choose to play as any one of these characters or you can play a simultaneous two-player game, as long as one of you is the Toxic Crusader.

Once you've chosen your crusaders, you've got to get used to the attacking system. You have two normal modes of attack and a jump. And you can collect power-ups as you kill more Smogulans. As well as powering up your attack, they can also replenish your strength. There are many different coloured "orbs" to collect, and it'll take you a while to remember what each one does.

Once you've got all that sorted out you can then get on with the mission in hand. There are six main levels to get through and each level has two acts. Starting in Tromaville, you need to chase the Smogulans onto their ship, to the spaceport, across the water, into Smogulaville and finally to Czar Zoster's Palace.

CUTTING THE CRAP

Your mission will not be easy, however, because this game is... no sorry I can't continue with this, let's get down to the bone. This game is terrible. Graphically, it's very poor with plain colours, boring characters and some dodgy animation, and sonically it's fair to middling, but the whole game just *plays* so abysmally. The first level is OK, but get to level two and things really start getting on your nerves. It has one of those awful sections in which you have to manoeuvre through a pathway to reach the other side, but because you can't control Toxie delicately, you fall in the water a few too many times. This also happens on level four, and you just lose too many lives, not through any fault of your own, just because the game is such rubbish.



This is the really awful bit, where you have to walk around the water, but you can't help falling in

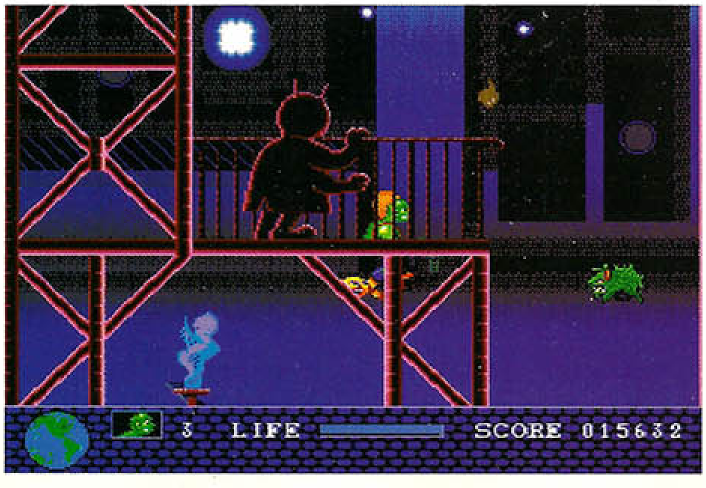
Toxic Crusaders is also much too easy. After a couple of hours play you'll be on the fourth level. After a couple more, you'll finish the game.

This game is just the same old dire scrolling game that we've all seen before. Come on guys, let's have some interesting software before everyone goes off and starts buying Super Nintendos.

Ⓜ *Paul Mellerick*

GET A GRIP!

- Ⓢ Pauses the game to give you a breather, and boy will you need one
- Ⓤ Ⓓ Ⓛ Ⓡ Moves you around the screen
- Ⓐ This is your shoot-1 weapon. Collect the power-ups to strengthen it
- Ⓑ This is your shoot-2 weapon. Collect the power-ups to strengthen it
- Ⓒ Your jump button. Press twice to perform a spin-jump



As well as dealing with the guy on the ground, you've got to avoid the slime which is thrown down by the guy in the foreground

Toxic Crusaders
©1992 SEGA

PUBLISHER: Sega USA (IMPORT)
PRICE: £40 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit
CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

- You can join forces with Toxie as one his pals
- Try Easy, Medium or Hard, but I wouldn't bother with any of them if I were you!
- You have three lives
- No battery back-up or password system
- Six levels, two parts to each, so twelve bits in all!

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	3
GAME SIZE	6
ADDICTION	2

"Boring, slow, ugly repetitive, and far too easy. Why you'd want to play this is beyond me"

33 PERCENT

JERRY GLANVILLE'S PIGSKIN FOOTBRAWL

American footy is a mixture of tactical strategy and brutal violence. Like Neil West, this game implements the latter

Jerry Glanville's a scary guy. If he spilled your pint, *you'd* apologise to *him;* he's that kind of guy, and he's renowned in the NFL for coaching tough American football. This game bears his name and emphasises the more violent aspects of the sport, to put it mildly.

As you should all know by now, *John Madden's* is not only the best American football game, it's also (in MEGA's opinion) the best game full stop on the Mega Drive, so *Jerry Glanville's Pigskin Footbrawl* is up against tough competition from the start. Fortunately, *Jerry's* doesn't try to beat *Madden's* at its own game. Instead, it goes for a different style of gameplay altogether.

THE DARKER DAYS

The game is set in the dark ages when men were men, warriors were psychopathic sadists and American football hadn't even been invented. Until 621 AD that is, when a very early version was conceived at court by a court jester named Inefel. This version is very simple – two teams of gladiators take to the field and try to get a pigskin football to the opponent's end zone. In true gladiator fashion, things are spiced up a bit with the introduction of a scattering of deadly weapons on the playing area.

American football is a many faceted game, and the control system is something which needs careful consideration. *John Madden* set a fine example. This game, however, doesn't. As I've said, it's loosely based on the American game, but it is a lot simpler. All you have to do is chase the ball, and when you've got it, run or pass it. There are no rules – any number of forward or backward passes can be thrown, and tackling is really just unadulterated violence.

You control only the team captain with the joypad, but you do stipulate the team's attitude during the game. You can choose Scatter and Block on the offence, or Man to Man, Get the Ball and Bad Attitude on the defence. When one of the players gets the ball he can be either left to his own devices, which entails him pegging it for the end zone clutching the pigskin, or you can force him to pass to the team captain. As team captain you have the option of running with the ball, making a short or long pass or a drop kick. You can also press the punch button, which causes the whole team to start hitting out at the opposition.

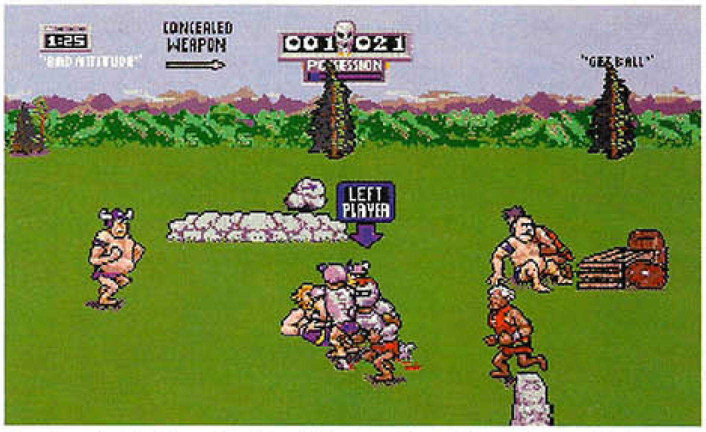
As mentioned, the playing field is littered with dangerous weapons, which you can pick up as the team captain. Once you've got them though, it's up to the game when you use them, which is generally during the massive pile-on rucks that frequently occur. There are also obstacles, like water holes and trap doors, so your team is constantly bumping into things and falling over.

NO MORE THAN A NOVELTY

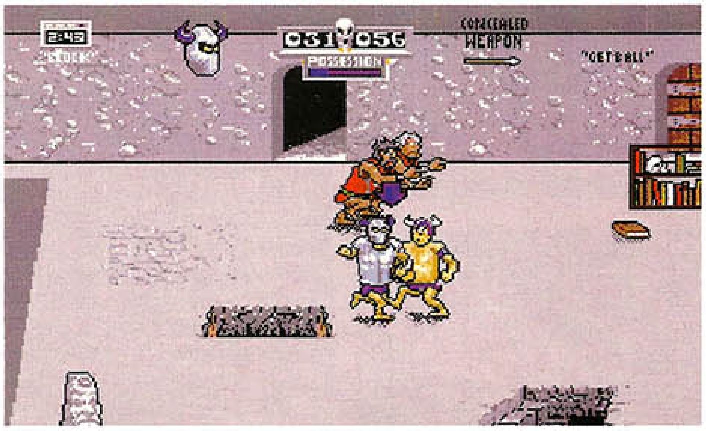
Sadly, although vaguely amusing at first, the novelty of seeing a load of gladiators fall all over the place soon wears off.

You do get to play on two different playing fields and there's the concession to tactics with the attitude setting, but apart from that it's all just rush around pushing the punch button and hoping for the best. There's very little sense that you're having much to do with the proceedings and consequently there's no satisfaction when you do well. As much as I like American football (and Jerry Glanville) this can't be recommended.

Ⓜ *Neil West*



American football is not such a violent sport in reality you know. Well alright then, it is, but there's a lot of strategy involved too



If your idea of fun is watching violent morons bumble around the screen while you wiggle the joypad, then you'll love this game

GET A GRIP!

Ⓤ Ⓓ Ⓛ Ⓡ Controls the direction of your Team Captain on the playing field

Ⓐ Selects the attitude setting for your team

Ⓑ Press to wind up a punch, and release to let the punch fly

Ⓒ Scrolls through your choices of eligible receivers when you're passing

Jerry Glanville's
PIGSKIN
FOOTBRAWL

PUBLISHER: Razor Soft (IMPORT)
PRICE: £35 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit
CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

One or two players can brawl it out on the field

There are two levels of skill: Regular and Pro

Four periods of playing time: each lasts between two and four minutes

No battery back-up and no password system

Two different playing fields: indoor and outdoor

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	4
GAMEPLAY	4
GAME SIZE	3
ADDICTION	4

"Whether you're an American football fan or not, this game has very little to offer. Avoid"

42 PERCENT

MEGA-LO-

"Do you want to be on my team?" is the question. "Uh, no, I'd rather drop a large thermo-nuclear weapon on your house" is the answer. Neil West tries to bring peace to the ravaged lands of Mega-Lo-Mania – and fails, quite spectacularly

The four megalomaniacal tyrants have fought each other to a standstill in a war for control of the 26 islands. So you are the wild card in the *Mega-Lo-Mania* pack: a new leader so mad, so bad, so dangerous to know, that there's a real chance you can break this stalemate and capture all the islands in all the Epochs of the system!

Mega-Lo-Mania is an evolutionary war-game which kicks off in the Stone Age, and by force of arms you must drag your army kicking and screaming into the 1990s. As each Epoch (group of three islands set in the same time zone) falls, your scientists develop new weapons – bows, bullets, bombers and eventually thermo-nuclear warheads – all of which can be used on your unsuspecting foes. And in a straight-up street fight what would you rather have, a pointed stick or an F-16?

LOOKING GOOD

The battle for each island takes place in close-up on the right of the screen. A huge graphic map is displayed and it shows your tower (HQ) and some of your folk going about their daily business. The folk look cute, almost like Trolls with attitude. These boys are your cannon fodder, your warriors, who must be raised, cherished and killed. Build them a weapon and you see them carting it around, and when they advance a level of technology, they get a new set of clothes. *Mega-Lo-Mania* looks like no other strategy test you've ever seen. It looks great, funny even!

To the left of the map, at the top of the screen, sit three (occasionally four) shields, the colours of which represent different leaders. Click on these, close your eyes and you'll be in for a big surprise, because *Mega-Lo-Mania* actually talks back! Now synthesised speech is nothing new, but it's normally total crap, but *Mega-Lo-Mania's* lines are spoken in character by radio actors.

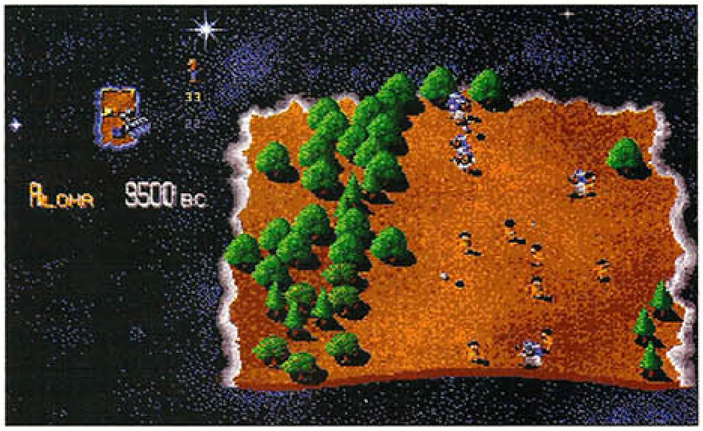
Oberon, who sounds as camp as a row of tents, implores, "Do you want to be on my team?". Caesar, the decidedly Latin chappie, adds, "Ci, ci" to everything, while Scarlet makes Thatcher looks like Bambi! Your lackeys have voices too, and their words offer valuable gameplay clues as well as add character to the game. Lisping scientists proudly announce, "Ergonomically tewiffik" when an invention is as potent as it can be. And when minerals are in short supply, a gentleman of Northern extraction intones, "We're running out of elements" – why you can almost hear the whippets cooing and the pigeons barking in the background.

HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA

Or, how to take a backward country, join the arms race, win, and then kill a large number of people very quickly.

Basically, this involves building a mine so that you can extract minerals from the earth, then building a factory in which to make weapons and a lab in which to develop new weapons. Having done all that, you can then go about slaughtering the opposition.

The people of MadCap are building a mine, to help them extract minerals


ALOHA
9500 BC

In a classic David and Goliath match-up, the tech level two blue warriors stitch up the tech level one yellows. Oh you only sing when you're winning...

> **The action starts in the Stone Age, and you must drag your army screaming and kicking into the 90s**

GET A GRIP!

↑ ↓ ← → Moves cursor between icons. See SO WOS THAT DO THEN? box for details

Ⓐ Flicks cursor to select nearest major icon

Ⓑ Increases manpower and acknowledges choice

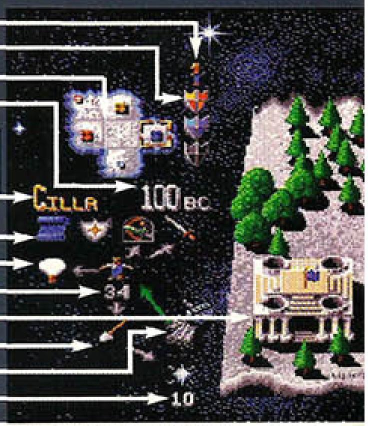
Ⓒ Decreases manpower

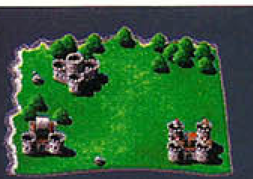
CILLA 9500 BC

Once you've opened a mine, it can't be closed – without a public inquiry

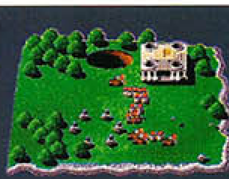
SO WOS THAT DO THEN?

Mega-Lo-Mania is a swine for icons and numbers, but they're quite simple. This is what each one means...

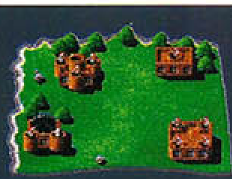

TIME – Three different settings
SHIELDS – Enemies and alliances
MAP – Move view and armies about
TECHNO LEVEL – How advanced it is
ISLAND NAME – Where you are
RECIPE – For specific weapons
SHIELD – The power of your tower
DEFENDERS – Houses your defenders
ATTACK – You can build an army
INVENT – Brings up invention menu
MEN – Available men
YOUR TOWER – Don't lose this
MINE – Send people down 't' pit!
GATHERED MATERIAL – Minerals
MINED MINERALS – To be dug up
MINES – A hole in the ground
CILLA
100 BC
34
10



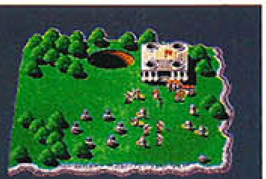
Now the mine's complete, they've started work on a factory



The factory is set up for a full run of heavy weapons

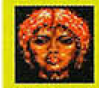


And then there's the lab. This helps speed up weapon development



That's the way to do it. It should now be easy to crush the opposition

FACE VALUES



SCARLET – Demi-goddess, President and MEP for Pleidies North. Yeah, this is one vicious lady. She can't be trusted in alliances, but can be lured easily into battle. The trouble is she usually wins!

OBERON – King of the Agol and bit player in Midsummer Night's Dream. This chap may sound like a rather large ladies shirt, but don't be fooled by his camp tones, because he *will* betray you.

CAESAR – Godfather of the Trapeziun Mafia and inventor of individual portion pet food. This guy is reasonably trustworthy – he likes arms races, territorial gain and is a recognised expert on Raymond Chandler.

MADCAP – The Andromedon Mercenary Supreme used to be GamesMaster's stunt double. Now that he's retired, he likes to work in the garden, collect stamps, drink sherry and blanket bomb cities.

VICIOUSLY TESTING

Effects, however, aren't everything – there has to be gameplay too. *Mega-Lo-Mania* sneaks the gameplay in through the back door while you're marvelling at the smart use of sound and pics. You see, *Mega-Lo-Mania* is a bit of a con. It looks like an arcade game with strong cute graphics, yet underneath it's a nastily vicious test of guns, guts and your god-like powers.

To the bottom left of the game screen are a series of icons, and these are all you need to worry about for 98% of the game. Here you manage the members of your population, and instruct them to mine for resources, research new weapons, build factories or tool up and get hostile.

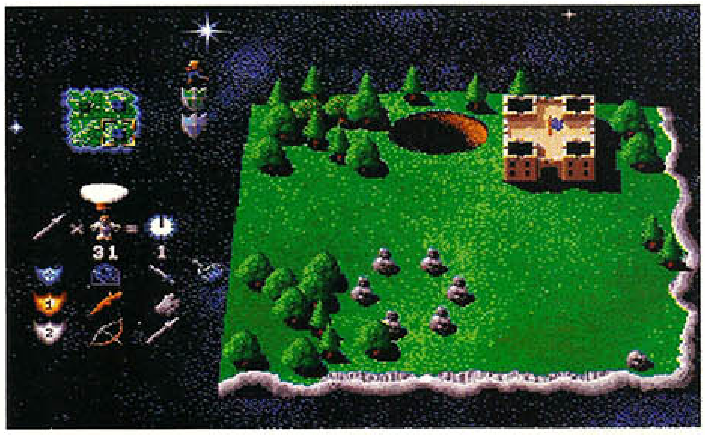
Manpower, minerals and time are all that matter in *Mega-Lo-Mania*. You have to gain the upper hand in two of these areas if you are to prosper. Investing time and your entire population in research will leave you an advanced, but sparse, race. Sending whole hordes of the population off mining will boost your minerals stockpile and so aid weapons production, but you'll have to push your "tech level" up if you want to make best use of them. And leaving a large gang of ready warriors in your tower will boost population growth, but it won't produce anything with which to arm them.

The basic gameplay equation remains the same, despite the changing Epochs and the gradual rise of technology. But just as the weapons gradually improve, so the gameplay slowly mutates. The first Epoch provides three training islands, so you can get to grips with the basics. The second Epoch is an arms race to invent the cannon or catapult. Epoch three introduces a new range of killer toys and everything slows down into a test of your careful management of finite resources. In Epoch four, war-planes appear and long-range raids become feasible. Even nuclear weapons are eventually developed, and then the pace picks up as you fight to be the first to invent and use the bomb.

Mega-Lo-Mania is a furious challenge. It's big, real big, but it doesn't cop out and use just sheer weight of numbers to overwhelm your forces, preferring real tactics instead. It's not always exciting, just wonderfully tense as you watch the clock tick. The voices give your in-game foes character, and combined with the graphics, they provide a powerful play incentive. They make learning some of the more complex in-game procedures painless. And once you've learned how to kill people efficiently, it's kind of hard to stop playing.

Ⓜ ***Neil West***

MANIA



Here we see science in action. The metal spear is being invented by 31 folk and it'll take them one sweep of the clock. As easy as, erm, E=MC2 really

GAMES
Sensible
MEGA lo MANIA
© 1992 SENSIBLE SOFTWARE
PUBLISHED BY VIRGIN GAMES
LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES

PUBLISHER: Virgin

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: March '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Virgin 081 960 2255

This game is, not altogether surprisingly, for lone wolves

No skill levels as such, but each battle is tougher than the last

Just keep battling through the Epochs until you win

Passwords are awarded after each battle

There are 27 very different wars to win

GRAPHICS 9

SOUND 10

GAMEPLAY 9

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 8

> **"Vicious, addictive and silly. What more could a God game give you? You'd be mad to miss this"**

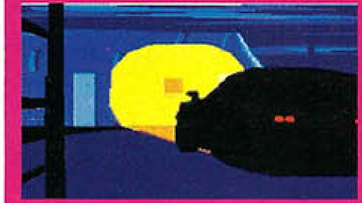
88

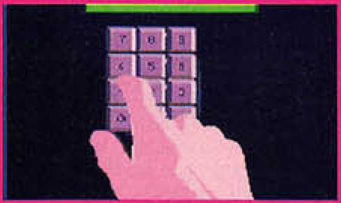
PERCENT

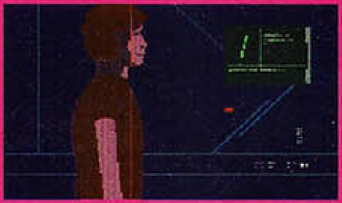
ANOTHER

The concept of the game may be refreshingly new, but unfortunately it's the same old story for Paul Mellerick: he's off in another world...

CUE INTRO SEQUENCE: LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION


① Lester pulls up in a car that's miles better than a Chevette


② As the lab is top secret, he has to enter the door code first...


③ ... And then he gets scanned by a security laser to check his ID

Science was always incredibly dull when I was at school. And the only kids who ended up doing physics or chemistry were the ones with bottle glasses and greasy hair, who whiffed of Wright's Coal Tar soap. Still, it seems nobody told Lester Knight Chaykin – the dodgily named hero of *Another World* – about this. Lester is the Warren Beatty of scientists. He drives a flash black Ferrari, earns huge pots of money and gets to hang out with lots of hot babes (such as the legendary science groupies, Judith Hann and Maggie Philbin of Tomorrow's World).

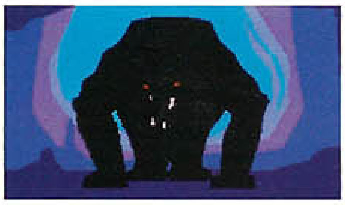
Late one stormy night, Lester was working on an experiment – he'd probably just had a big row with Maggie Philbin and felt obliged to leave the flat; you know how it goes. Suddenly, a bolt of lightning struck the laboratory, blew up his equipment and sent him into a hostile world full of blobby aliens. And guess what, it's your job to get him out of there.

> **Even if it is just a tarted up platform game, it's still a great deal of fun**

CINEMA REALITY

The first thing you notice about the other world is that it looks pretty weird. And weird graphics is what *Another World* is all about. If you missed the hype when the game was released on the Amiga and PC last year, you won't know that *Another World's* "unique selling points" are its cinema-style graphics and storyline. It's obvious from the start that this game fancies itself as a bit of a Steven Spielberg production. The intro sequence is just like a little movie (check out the LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION box above to see what we mean), and the rest of the game goes for more of the same.

These days lots of games boast about having cinema-style graphics, but *Another World* goes further than most in order to deliver the goods. For instance, when Lester wakes up in an alien prison, the game shows a close-up of his cellmate coming into focus as Lester recovers from a stun laser. And later on, when Lester and his fellow prisoner have escaped, Lester bends down to pick up a gun, and we see a close-up of his hand reaching for it. It's all very nicely animated, all very swish and it helps to make the game feel altogether very atmospheric.

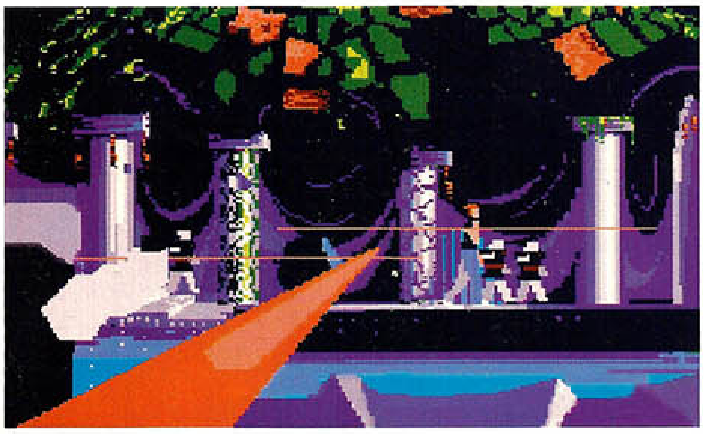

At the start of the game you'll spend your first few goes dying at the hands of this dark thingy. Nasty, eh?

PLATFORM GAMEPLAY

Now, I haven't actually mentioned the game itself yet and that's because the graphics really are what *Another World* is all about. If you take away the clever visuals, you won't find much else. Most of the levels are standard run left, run right, jump and shoot platformers. They're a lot trickier than the average platform game – there's only one particular way of doing each level – but that old platform gameplay shines through.

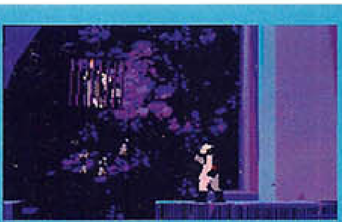
Even if it is just a tarted-up platform game, however, it's still a great deal of fun to play. Once you get to grips with Lester's slightly unresponsive controls, playing through each level of the game and watching the plot of the "movie" unfold before you is really engrossing (for the first few times you play anyway).

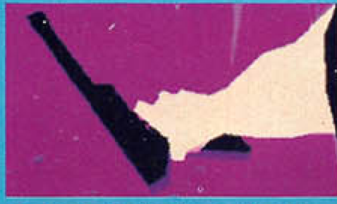
When he's trotting about the place normally, Lester can run, jump and kick (I say kick, but it looks more like he's scraping some dog pooh off his shoe) and there's a nifty gun to be found. All the other moves are context-sensitive, so you'll need

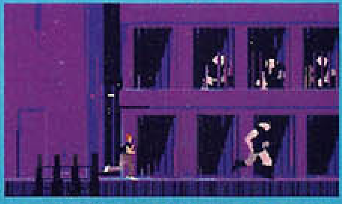

Lester "shakes his little tush on the catwalk", but finds that none of the blobby aliens are Right Said Fred fans. So much for alien culture...

ANOTHER GREAT ESCAPE

Early on in the game, Lester is captured by the blobby aliens of *Another World* and wakes up to find himself in a cell with the blobby alien equivalent of Steve McQueen. Having thrown their only baseball through the bars, Lester and Steve decide to escape and so hatch a cunning plan that goes something like this...

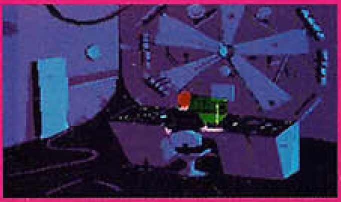

① Les and Steve start swinging the cell about from side to side


③ Lester bends down and grabs the guards gun for later use

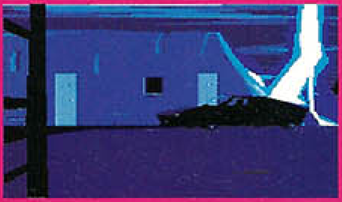

④ Steve's raced off somewhere so Lester decides to go after him

WORLD

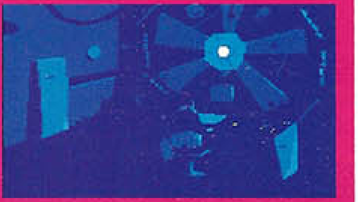
Another World's designers obviously failed to get into film school, as they've tried to make this game look as close to film as possible. Luckily they chose to copy Hollywood instead of Peter Greenaway or we'd have ended up with a game full of shots of Helen Mirren with no clothes on instead of this nice sequence



④ He sits down, and boots up his new program on funny particles



⑤ Outside, a storm's brewing and a bolt of lightning hits the lab...

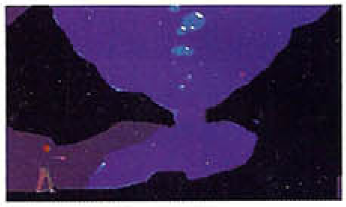


⑥ ... And BAM! Les is off. (Well, not yet, but he's about to. Promise)

to press a button to make him open a door or use a teleporter at certain points in the game. As the game develops you'll find that you can only make it through each level if you perform a strict set of actions – open this door, shoot that guard and walk here. This moves the plot along nicely, but makes the game feel somewhat restrictive.

LIMITED LONGEVITY

Another World is an oddity, really. The unusual graphics and impressive filmy bits are stunning at times. The game is structured in a way which means it does feel as if you're playing through an enjoyable sci-fi thriller, but just like a movie, it'll all be over in an evening. The first stages won't take long to crack, and using the passwords, you can keep plugging away at a tough level until you beat it. Once you've finished a level and got over its graphical finery, I doubt if you'll want to play it again too often – the rigid "move here, press that, do this" gameplay doesn't make this the sort of stuff you would pick up for a blast very often. And so, once you've finished the whole game, which most of you will do in a matter of hours, there's not a great deal in here to make you want to come back for more.



Water, water everywhere? Nah, too corny. Honey, I shot the central dam support. Yeah, that's much better

NOVEL, BUT UNDEMANDING

Now I don't want you to go away thinking that *Another World* is a pile of old rubbish. It's very enjoyable while it lasts, and it really does make you feel as if you're part of the action and not just the person behind the controls. *Another World* has great novelty value, but once you've been there, seen this and done that a few times, the novelty *will* wear off. If you are after a couple of nights of gripping, weird-looking fun, then this is for you, but if you're looking for some sort of a challenge, look somewhere else.

Ⓟ Paul Mellerick

GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓑ ⊲ ⊳ Makes Les crouch and go left 'n' right

Ⓐ Fires the gun, builds up the power of the shot and makes him run

Ⓑ Also fires the gun, builds up the power of the shot and makes him run

Ⓒ Makes Lester jump up in the air and leap across things

PUBLISHER: Virgin

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: May '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Virgin

Just the one player

Just the one level of skill

Just the one life (This is getting boring – Neil)

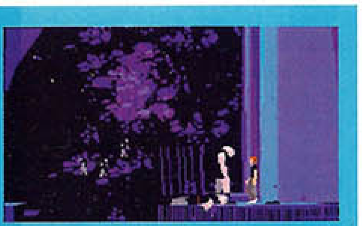
There is a password for every level of the game (That's better)

There are a total of 14 levels

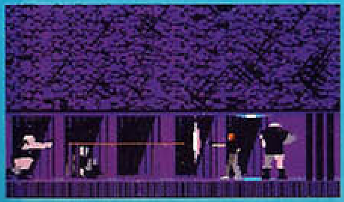
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	7
GAME SIZE	5
ADDICTION	6

> **"Original and exciting arcade adventure. Great fun to play, but too easy, and once you've done it you won't come back for more"**

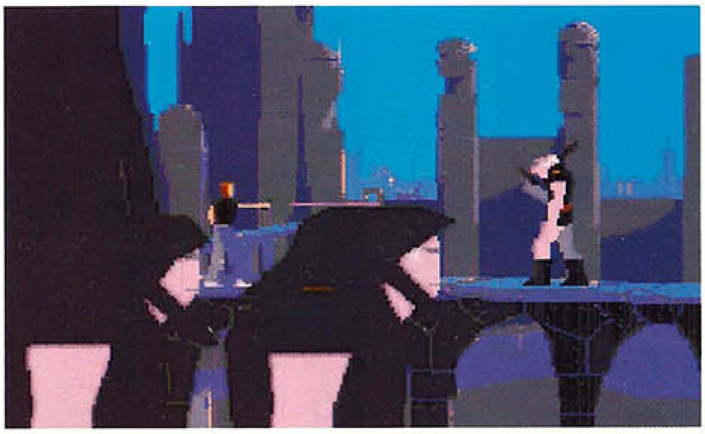
73 PERCENT



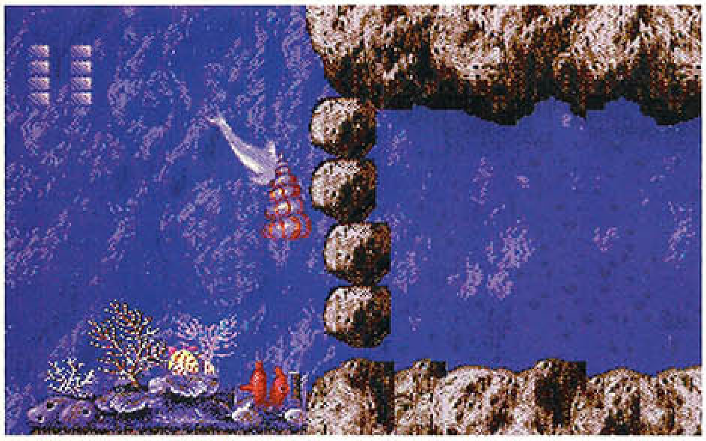
② All the swinging makes the cell fall down on top of the guard



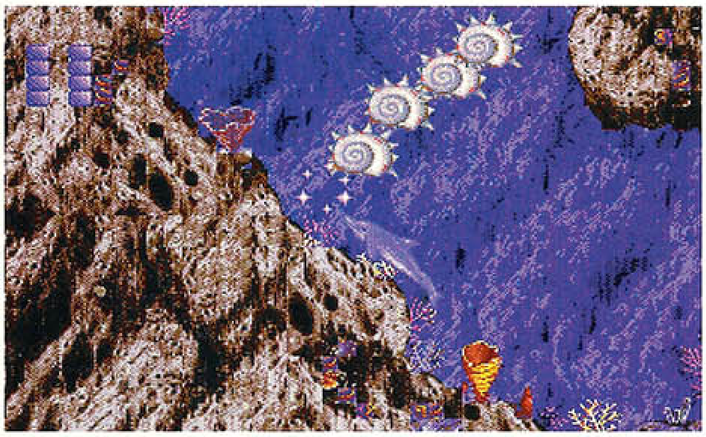
⑤ And as Steve picks the lock, Lester holds off the other guards



As Lester blasts a blobby guard in the background, two of the much rarer blobby aliens with humorous beards venture out of their nest for some air



One of the many skills you'll have to perfect is gently nudging this falling shell so that it hits the rock barrier and destroys it. It takes lots of practice



Swim into this wall of shells and you'll lose energy. Instead, you should use your nose-butting tactics to destroy them and clear a path to the next bit

Stand aside high-speed hedgehogs and Italian plumbers, the hero of '93 could well be a dolphin. Meet Ecco...

If some computer programmers had come up to me a couple of months ago and said that they were thinking of releasing a dolphin simulator, I'd have had a few pertinent questions to ask like "Will it be called *Mutant Machine Gun Sea Mammals From Hell* then?" or "Will it involve hordes of murdering robotic Dolphins?". Had I been told that it was quite simply a game about a dolphin which has to swim gracefully around the seascape rescuing other underwater animals, I'd have laughed and pointed the programmers towards the door.

I was surprised then to find that *Ecco* is a gentle dolphin sim with little action and heaps of twee loveliness. I am further surprised to report that it's one of the best Mega Drive games I've ever played.

At the start of the game, everything is just perfect. You get to swim around a beautiful lagoon practising your graceful dolphin movements and chatting to a number of other dolphin chums. Once you've got the hang of the controls (it doesn't take long, and once you've mastered them, the movements are perfect) you can begin the game by leaping high into the air. This activates a vortex, which sucks all the various lifeforms from the sea. It is then up to you to try to figure out what the hell is going on and hopefully rescue said lifeforms.

Dolphins are actually pretty tasty in a ruck

DOLPHIN TALK

The question on everyone's lips is what on earth does Ecco have at his disposal for solving mysteries? Well, firstly he can use his sonic abilities in a variety of ways. By sending out a sonic blast Ecco can call up a map of the surrounding area. This is very useful for route-finding, a lot of which has to be done in this game.

He can also use his "voice" to talk to other sea creatures (dolphins and whales). When Ecco's spoken to an animal, a bizarre cryptic reply is displayed on the screen. This will detail one of two things. You'll either find out what Ecco has to do on a certain level, like save a dolphin's friends who are trapped, or you'll be given a clue as to how to solve a problem.

Another useful ability Ecco has is the nose butt. This can be used to fight off enemies, eat fish in order to top up his energy supply or activate glyphs. Ah yes the glyphs. Occasionally Ecco comes across a crystal (that's what a glyph is) blocking a passageway. When he tries to talk to it a message tells you that he cannot pass yet. You then know that Ecco has to search for another glyph. Nose butt the second glyph and a sonic beam will engulf him. If Ecco now returns to the first glyph and gives it a sonic blast, it'll fall away and the route through the passage will be clear.

FISHTICUFFS

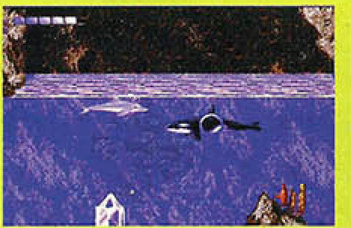
So what else do dolphins get up to? They fight of course. They may appear to be all sweetness and light, but dolphins are actually pretty tasty in a ruck, especially against sharks. Again, this is where the nose butt comes in. But useful though it is, it's not infallible, and care must be taken to line Ecco up for a shot properly or he'll get wasted. In fact, of all the sea creatures Ecco encounters, the most dangerous appear to be the puffer fish. They may be small, but these spiky little bleeders can zip around like Dickie Lightning (a phrase which parents always use but never seem to know where it came from).

One final point on hazards: not all the enemies can be fought. Some are just there to cause trouble, and an excellent example of such an obstruction is the giant octopus. When Ecco tries to get past his tentacles, the octopus strikes. The secret is to gently swim past as

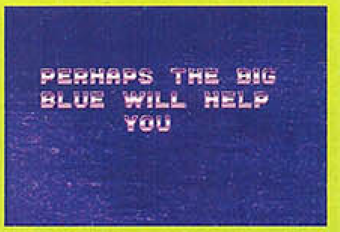
Turn Over

TALKING TO THE ANIMALS

Each time you meet another friendly sea creature, don't just ignore it. Try having a bit of a chin-wag instead. You'll know which creatures are talkative, because if you try to converse with things like giant squid, you'll get seven shades of salmon kicked out of you. Talk to whales or dolphins though, and they'll tell you all sorts of interesting gossip. The trouble is, the meaning of their statements is not always immediately obvious.

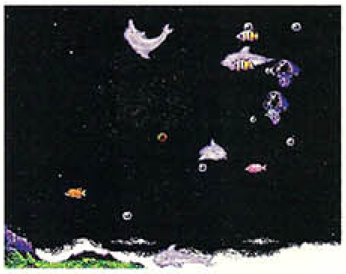


Activating your sonar is like saying "Oi, fish face, give me some info" or something like that (probably)



PERHAPS THE BIG
BLUE WILL HELP
YOU

Your friend will then respond like this. God only knows what he's on about, but all becomes clear later

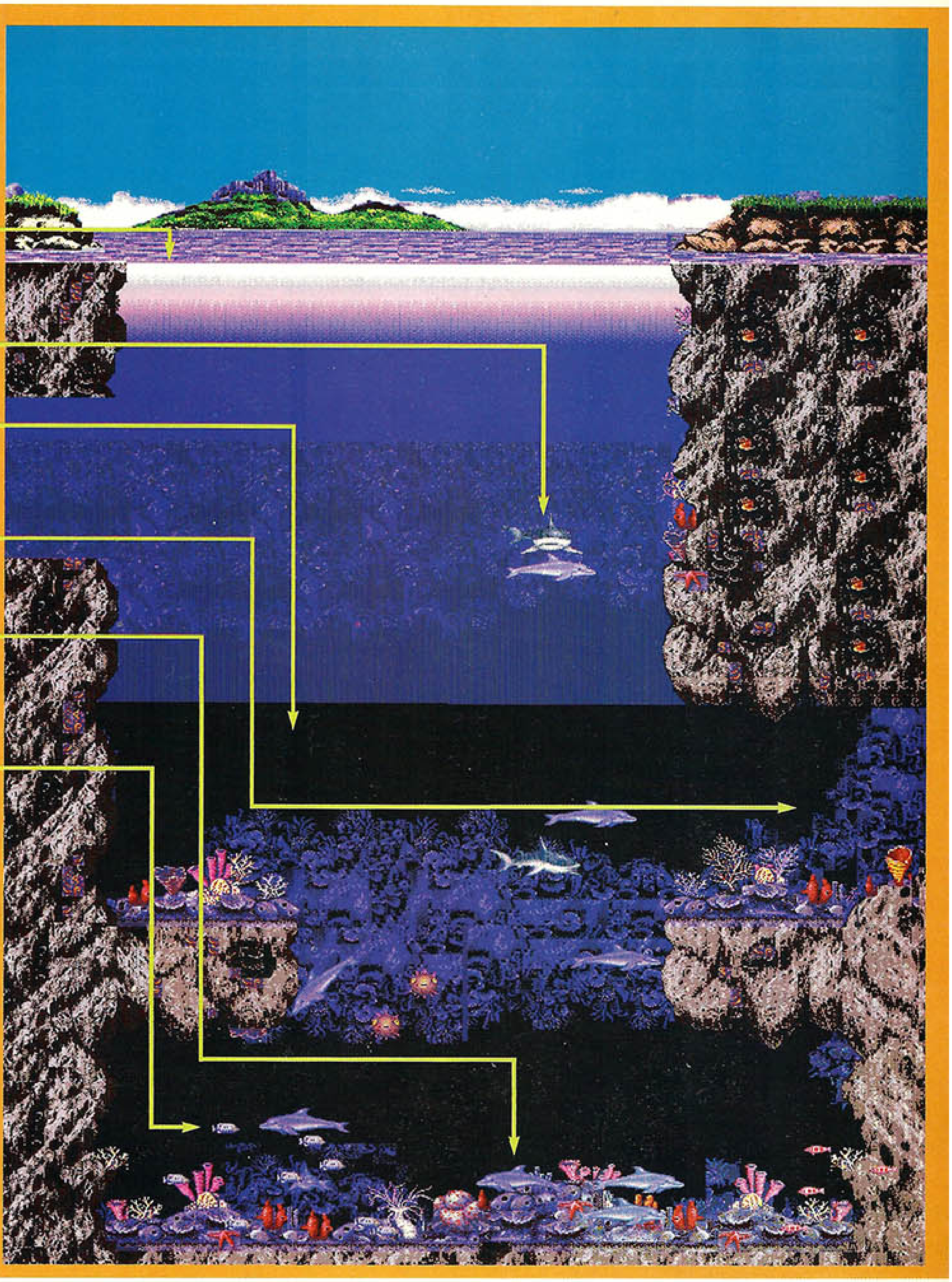


At the start of the game, a mystery fiend switches on his astral Hoover and sucks up all the sea creatures

ECCO THE

INTO THE BLUE

Good lord, look at the size of this screenshot. Basically, what we've done is tag loads of screens together. But we've also cheated a little, because this isn't exactly how this area appears in the game. It does, however, show more clearly what you're likely to come up against. Clever huh?



This is where sea meets air. It's an important little area, because dolphins breathe air, so Ecco has to come up here regularly to top up his oxygen supply

The sharks look a bit fearsome, but a few sharp butts will let them know who's boss

No, this isn't a giant undersea oil slick. This game is so realistic that as you swim deeper, everything becomes darker and darker. This gives the game a real feeling of depth

Could this be an escape route from the murky depths? Er, not really. There are many dead ends like this in the game. Explore and discover

This dolphin needs rescuing. Swim down to him, have a chat, and then he'll start following your every move. You can then guide him back to the surface protecting him from the sharks as you go

Harmless little fishes can be very useful. If you've taken a lot of hits and your energy is running low, butt a few fish and you'll soon be back to full health

GET A GRIP!

⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ Moves Ecco around the screen

Ⓐ Activates Ecco's sonar and brings up the map screen

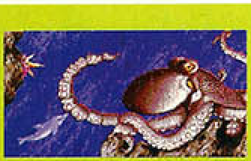
Ⓑ Makes Ecco butt and do a quick sprint

Ⓒ Makes Ecco swim faster

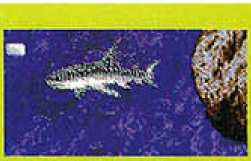
DOLPHIN

COUSTEAU CORNER

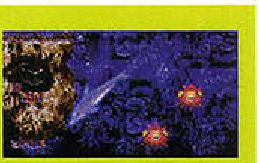
Hello children. Today we're going to learn about the kingdom beneath the waves. As our friend Ecco moves around he'll come across many wonderful sea-creatures. Some help him, but some are rather unfriendly. And remember kids, don't try to copy Ecco; he's a dolphin, and if you were to do the same, you'd explode in a flurry of blood and guts as the huge undersea pressures crushed you to death and forced your brains out through your eye sockets.



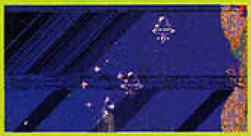
Swim past this guy slowly and you'll be alright



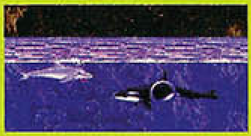
Beware the shark, for he doth screw you up



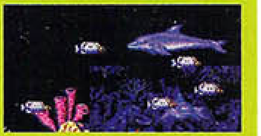
The puffer fish look harmless, but don't be fooled



The jellyfish are deadly. Butt them to see them off



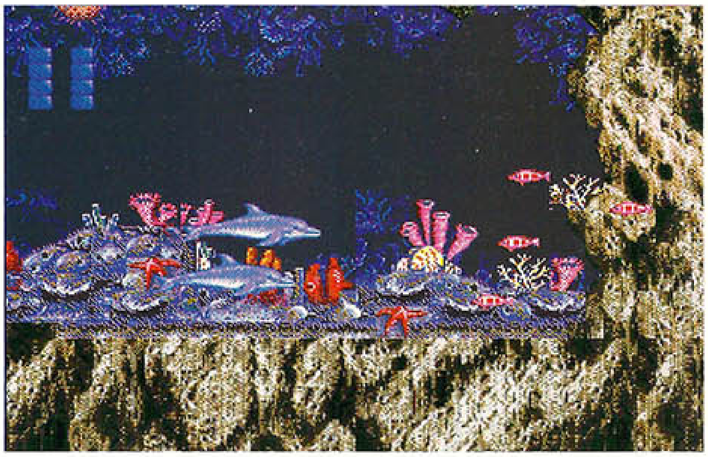
Talk to the whales to get some useful information



Butt the little fishes to regain vital energy

slowly as possible. This in turn causes additional problems, because by the time Ecco's ambled past, his air supply is dangerously low and this can be a right old pain when you discover that he's at a dead end and must go back past the octopus before he can resurface for more air.

And in case you're wondering what the air supply is all about, I'll tell you. Dolphins breathe air, that's why they've got those huge holes in the tops of their heads. It just happens that they can stay underwater for ages at a time. At the top of the screen is an energy meter and an air meter. The energy goes down whenever Ecco gets hit by an enemy or runs into some spiky coral formations. The air supply, however, goes down gradually but constantly. This means you either have to return Ecco to the surface regularly or find an underwater air pocket in order to top up. All this adds yet another element of danger and excitement to the game as it means you're constantly at the mercy of tight time limits.



Could it be that Ecco's found his twin brother? Er, no. As you can see, all dolphins look the bloody same, regardless of who their parents are

ROUTING AROUND

As I've already said, much of the gameplay involves route-finding. Ecco'll start off in one place and have to find his way through a labyrinth of undersea caves, searching out key glyphs and returning to the surface for air en route. However, once in a while he'll have to complete a minor mission (I say minor because they seem simple but are, in fact, bloody hard). One of the earlier tasks is to go and rescue a dolphin who is trapped deep under the water by a large group of sharks. It's up to Ecco to find him and then lead him back to the surface.

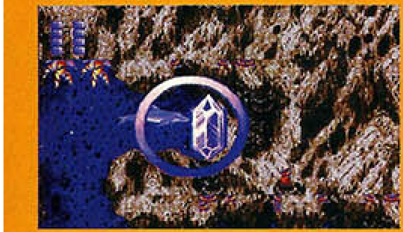
So against all the odds this strange idea for a game has given rise to one of the most enjoyable Mega Drive titles ever. Just learning the controls and thrashing around in the water is entrancing enough, but even when the novelty wears off there's a big, big game underneath with neat challenges and plenty of interesting things to discover. It's great for any gamer, but be warned, only the best out there are going to reach the end within a reasonable amount of time.

Ecco is the best thing I've seen in a long time and, for once, it doesn't rely on gratuitous violence or a cacky plot that's been used a million times before. No, this one's a true original and will be a true classic.

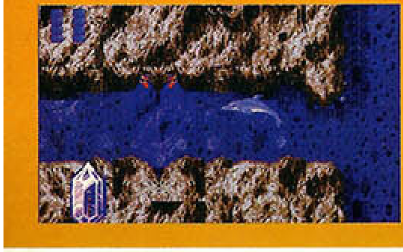
® *Andy Dyer*

Wheee! How graceful you look swooping over the rocks

RUN FOR YOUR GLYPH



"What's a glyph?" you ask yourself. Well, it's a crystal, plain and simple. But there's more than one type of glyph. There are glyphs that block Ecco's path though certain sections of the game, and then there are those which unlock the first type of glyph (and these are called key glyphs). If you find a glyph blocking the way, scoot off again and go in search of a key glyph. When you think you've found one, butt it and wait to see what, if anything, happens.



If you're lucky, a ring of energy will engulf you, as you can see in the other screenshot in this box. Then you know that you have activated the key glyph. Now all you need to do is swim all the way back to the glyph that was causing you all the problems in the first place and give it a good old-fashioned sonic blast. If everything's worked out OK, the glyph will slide down the screen and disappear. Be prepared to have to do this many times throughout the game.

ECCO
NOVOTRADE

PUBLISHER: Sega (IMPORT)

PRICE: £40 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

There's just the one player (or dolphin rather)

SKILL! No skill settings as such. The levels just get harder

Only one life, but the continues are infinite

There is a password system

There are 27 levels and they get pretty huge

GRAPHICS 9 ●●●●●●●●●○

SOUND 8 ●●●●●●●●○○

GAMEPLAY 9 ●●●●●●●●●○

GAME SIZE 9 ●●●●●●●●●○

ADDICTION 9 ●●●●●●●●●○

> **"This is a truly original game – something that you don't see very often on consoles. It's a vast game in every respect"**

93

PERCENT

The boxers in this game don't look awfully impressive. This butch woman who displays the round numbers looks like the only one who could put up a decent fight

Andy Dyer gets in a few rounds with George Foreman. It's just a shame it has to be in the ring rather than down at the local boozer. Ah well!

GEORGE FOREMAN'S KNOCKOUT BOXING

Ok, so software peeps always like to have a big or famous name attached to their products, but let's face it, in the case of boxing games, it's a bit of a dead loss. I mean, forget Mike Tyson, unless the game you're producing is a jail break simulator. Frank Bruno's a waste of time because he's, well... English?, and the remaining legends are either laughably past it (Ali. Mind you, having said that, Virgin have put his name to their latest sports release – see the review on page 48 of this issue of MEGA.) or merely barrel shaped and making a comedy comeback, which brings us rather nicely onto the most recent boxing release, *George Foreman's Knockout Boxing.*

BARREL-SHAPED VARIETY

In real-life, Georgie-boy is a bit of a laugh to look at – not really the stuff of champions – but what's worse is that by the time he's been converted into his on-screen counterpart, the results are hilarious. The representation of all the other opponents is pretty appalling too. What I'm basically getting at is that the graphics as a whole in this game are pretty dreadful. And just get a load of the scantily-clad woman who arthritically hobbles across the ring to display the round number. She looks more like a bloke in drag than a lithe young thing who's there to titillate the crowd.

But how does it play? Unfortunately, it plays a lot like the graphics look. For a start, the range of moves is a bit limited. You have five different punches, but to be honest, they're about as different as the individual members of the Black and White Minstrels. Just as those singing fellows varied in height, so do George Foreman's punches. And just as the Minstrels all but died out because they were blamed for being a bit racist and, er, crap, no doubt George Foreman's boxing game will slip into obscurity, though not on grounds of being racist, but simply because of its high crapness factor.

You can perform left and right hooks (to the body and head) and a superpunch. When a small boxing glove appears in the top left of the screen, you can use the superpunch. This is supposed to be a "super" punch, but it is in fact not a great deal more powerful than a normal punch.

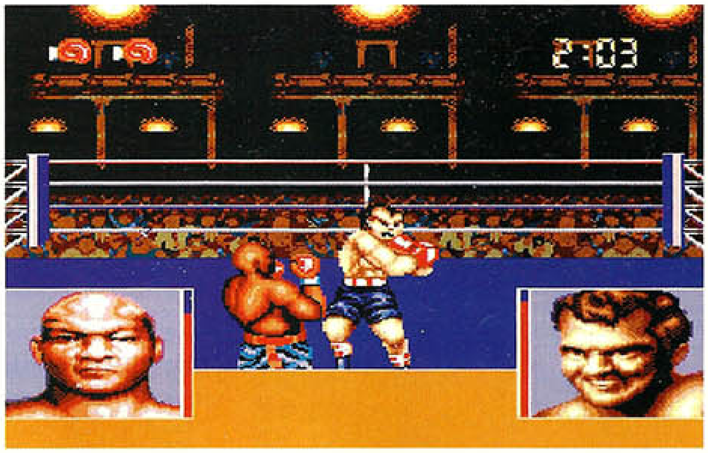
PULLING THE PUNCHES

However (and this is where things get really annoying), the opponent occasionally winds up his fist in preparation for his own "super" punch, and before you have a chance to gracefully side-step it, it's been delivered depriving you of almost all your energy in one go. This is, when all's said and done, rather bad. Instead of having fairly evenly matched players who gain victory by guile and cunning, we have some pretty unintelligent computer opponents who can provide a challenge only because their punches are a lot harder.

OK, it's pretty obvious by now that I'm not all that keen on the game, but it would be a pretty sad state of affairs if I couldn't find a single good thing to say about the game. Yes, it's bloody awful to play and yes, it doesn't look too hot, but there are 15 opponents to beat and they're pretty tough.

So, if you're a boxing freak, make sure you try this one out before you buy it and maybe, just maybe, it'll appeal to you. I doubt it, but if it does appeal, it'll probably be because there's plenty of challenge in here. There we go, compliment time over. *George Foreman's Boxing* is a sad and sorry little affair, and if you simply must have a boxing sim, get *Muhammad Ali Boxing* (reviewed on page 48).

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*



George stands aside while his opponent swings a punch in a crap manner

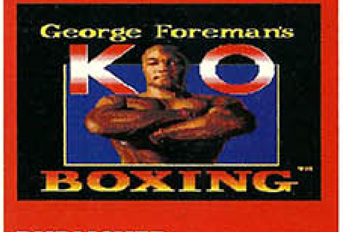
GET A GRIP!

⬆ ⬇ ⬅ ➡ Makes you dodge left and right , but don't expect to move very quickly

Ⓐ Makes George throw a left punch

Ⓑ Makes George throw a right punch

Ⓒ Delivers the Superpunch



PUBLISHER: Flying Edge (IMPORT)

PRICE: £35 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

One or two players can beat the living daylights out of a sprite

The game gets tougher as you work your way through the list of opponents

Er, it's a boxing game

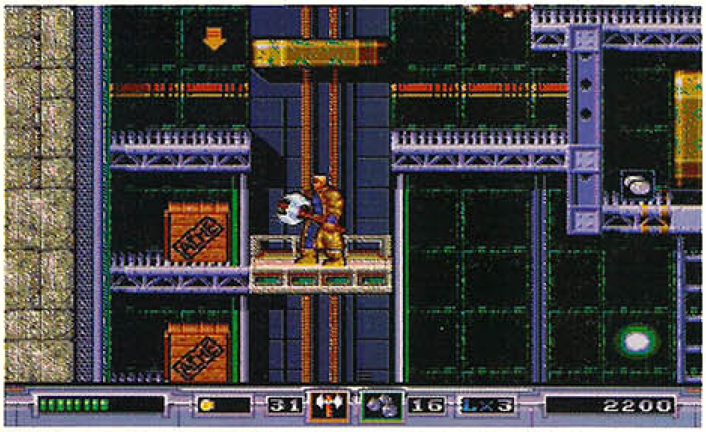
There is a password system. Beat someone, and you never have to fight him again

There are 15 opponents to beat

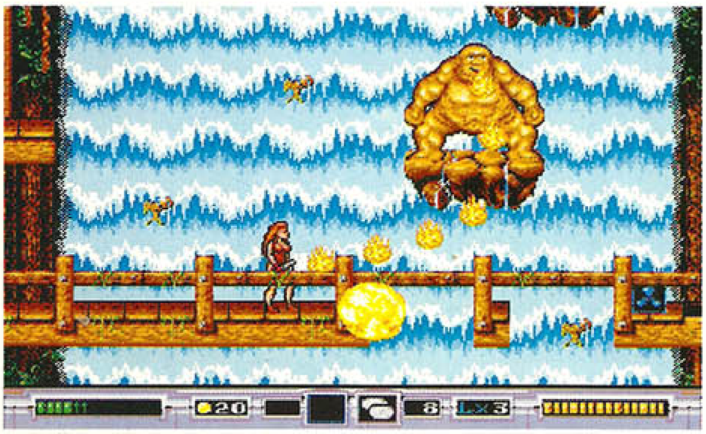
GRAPHICS	4
SOUND	5
GAMEPLAY	4
GAME SIZE	7
ADDICTION	2

> **"There are more than enough opponents to fight, but the dire gameplay and abysmal graphics make this a game to avoid. This has no entertainment value at all"**

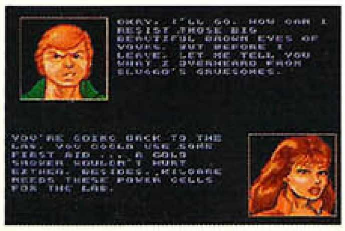
35 PERCENT



Smash open the ACME boxes using your axe and take the prize



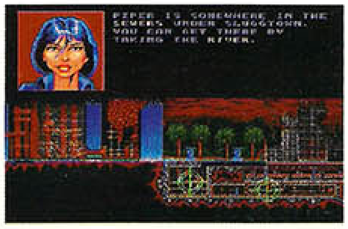
A particularly gruesome boss later on in the game uses his fiery breath to try to burn you. Wait, watch and then attack



OKAY. I'LL GO. HOW CAN I
RESIST THOSE BIG
BEAUTIFUL BROWN EYES OF
YOURS. BUT BEFORE I
LEAVE, LET ME TELL YOU
WHAT I OVERHEARD FROM
SLUGGO'S GRUESOMES.

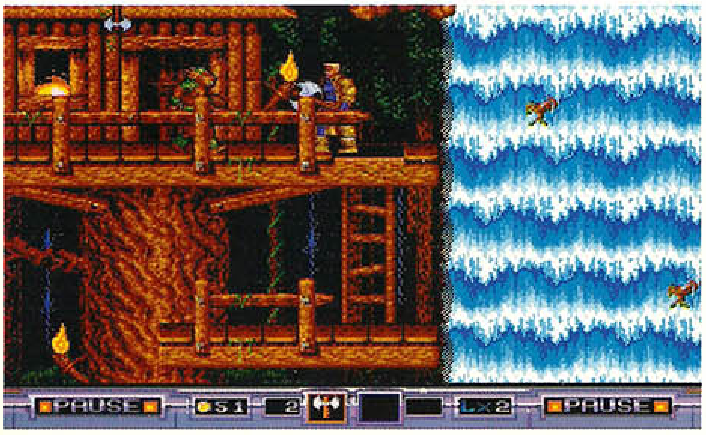
YOU'RE GOING BACK TO THE
LAB. YOU COULD USE SOME
FIRST AID ... A COLD
SHOWER WOULDN'T HURT
EITHER. BESIDES, KILOBRE
NEEDS THESE POWER CELLS
FOR THE LAB.

You've rescued the first Ex-Mutant and he's telling you all he knows



PIPER IS SOMEWHERE IN THE
SEWERS UNDER SLUGGTOWN.
YOU CAN GET THERE BY
TAKING THE RIVER.

Tanya is the second captive. Here she is telling you what lies ahead



Excuse me, Mr Mutant Turtle, can you tell me which way to go? No? Well then taste axe buddy. SWOOSH! Damn Turtles!

Mutants have overrun the earth and are threatening all normal human lifeforms. The MEGA team, well Paul Mellerick anyway, thinks that's rather outrageous and decides to try and do something about it

EX-M

Things are starting to get silly now. After years of having no comic book superhero related games, we've now got them coming out of out ears. First *Batman* (and *Batman Returns*) then *Spider-Man* and now *Superman, Captain America and the Avengers* and (coming soon) the *X-Men*. Now, while most comic book fans (and most other people for that matter) will know most of the above names, they may not have heard of the *Ex-Mutants*. So, before we get into the gameplay and essential stuff like that, let me give you a little run down on the history of these superheroes.

THE TALE BEGINS

The year is 2055 and thanks to the biological and chemical warfare of World War III most of the world's population has been mutated. These mutants have taken refuge underground, in the forests and in the crumbling buildings of what's left of their cities. Their intention is to take over the world. (A band of mutants taking over the world? Come on, their minds must have got mutated somewhere along the way too.) Anyway, their leader is called Sluggo, and boy is he one ugly git.

So, to stop the uglies accomplishing their task, the Ex-Mutants are formed – a band of six very skillful and brave humans who swear to protect the rest of the human populace. (What? Six ordinary humans against the entire mutants population. That's comic books for you.)

This is all very well until four of them get kidnapped on a particularly tough mission. The two remaining members (Ackroyd and Shannon) realise that they can't fight for the survival of the world alone and so they hatch a plan to rescue their kidnapped members... And that's where the action starts and YOU come into things.

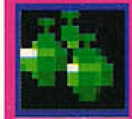
ON A MUTANT MISSION

Choosing either Ackroyd or Shannon (each has his own special abilities and weapons, balanced between crap and fantastic) you must work your way through 12 levels (there are actually only nine different scenes, as some levels share exactly the same scenery).

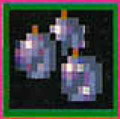
And so your fight begins, a fight which is not going to be easy as there are hordes of mutants already out there waiting for you. And just to make things even worse, each scene has a BIG level boss to deal with as well. Add to that the fact that you need to find a battery cell (to keep your cyborg instructor alive while you are on your mission) on each level before you can finish it, and you've got one tough task ahead of you.

SECONDARY WEAPONS

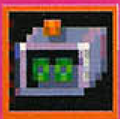
Your secondary weapons are more than just afterthoughts and they can really come in very handy. Use them wisely and you will move through the game very quickly. Also note that you can drop only three explosives at any one time. Bombs away...



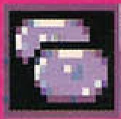
GRENADES: Er, well, they're grenades, and you er, throw them and then they er, blow up



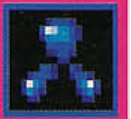
BOUNCING BOMBS: Difficult to aim accurately, but practice makes perfect as they say



LAND-MINES: Drop these and then run, 'cos they blow up when someone touches them



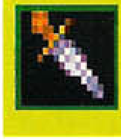
EXPLOSIVE CHARGES: Lay them down and run, because they've got very short fuses



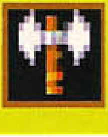
HOMING ORBS: Very useful, but not that powerful. Save them up for the bosses if you can

PRIMARY WEAPONS

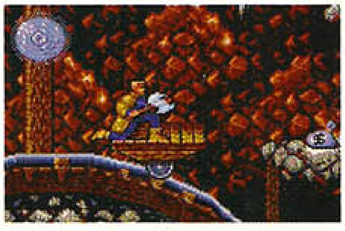
If you don't collect any power-ups, then your normal weapon won't be much good at all when it comes to the bosses. You may even find it a bit tough working your way through a level. There are two different ways in which to power up your primary weapon (Ackroyd's axe and Shannon's nunchakus), which are outlined below. Each has individual advantages at certain points during the game. So, remember what each power-up does and you should come out on top. The level on which you're playing determines how many shots you get: 75 for Easy, 50 for Medium and 25 for Hard.



SUPER SHOTS: Walk over this icon and when you fire your weapon, three-angled projectiles will fly across the screen



SPECIAL SHOT: Collect this one and you'll lob a special shot across the screen. Not quite as powerful as the Super Shots



The minecart section has traps (like the saw) but there are goodies too

UTANTS

Don't worry unduly, however, because Ackroyd and Shannon are real tough cookies and dab hands when it comes to using weapons. They both have primary and secondary weapons, which they can pick up and indeed use on their way through the game.

Your primary weapon stays the same (Ackroyd has an axe and Shannon uses her nunchakus), but you can power it and turn it into a longer-range weapon. The secondary weapons (like grenades and things) allow you to clear the path ahead and blow up all sorts of things – if you can't reach a particular point, try setting a bomb. You collect these different weapons by walking over them. If you're already carrying something and you don't want to collect the new icon, simply jump over it.

While *Ex-Mutants* might not be the most original game that's ever been made, everything in the game is so well put together that you really don't mind.

GRAPHICALLY GROTESQUE

The graphics stick to the comic book theme and each character stands out well from the background. All the different mutants you come across are so grotesque that you really do want to kill them. And if you want to see something really gross, check out the death sequence of an end-of-level boss as he explodes and the contents of his stomach fill the screen. Yeeucch!

The sound and sampled speech are great too. Completely waste a mutant, and hear Ackroyd shout out "Die you scumbag" or Shannon say "Get outta my way". The speech adds to an already heavy comic book feeling, but it is more than welcome.

Another nice thing about the game is the way the difficulty levels work. Rather than make the bad guys harder to kill or the bosses stronger in each stage, the game varies the amount of life you get from picking up food icons, the amount of super shots that power up your primary weapon and the number of continues as well. It might sound very complicated, but in practice, it makes the game a great challenge, something lacking in many of today's games. I'm not saying you won't finish it ever, just that it will take you some time to get through it.

NOT SO EASY ON EASY LEVEL

You may find it very useful to know that you can't finish the game on Easy level; you can play through some levels, but you stop someway from the end. This means that you won't finish the game straight off and so the Easy level acts as more of a training mode than anything else.

Ex-Mutants is a classic arcade platform slash-'em-up, but this time Sega have done some serious game testing and have provided some realistic options. If you like a bit of a challenge and platformers are your thang, then this game is definitely worth buying.

® *Paul Mellerick*

The superheroes are real tough cookies and dab hands when it comes to knocking off mutants

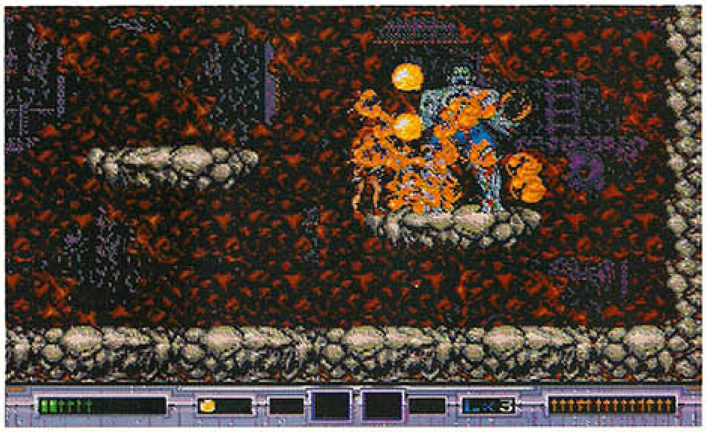
GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓥ Ⓛ Ⓡ These will move you around the place

Ⓐ Your attack button, which swings your weapon against an opponent

Ⓑ This button makes you jump, which, believe it or not, is useful for jumping onto ladders or over gaps

Ⓒ Press this when you want to use your current secondary weapon



The rather gross ending for the first boss. As he bites the dust his guts fly all over the screen. Oh, looks like carrots again

EX-MUTANTS
START
OPTIONS
© 1992 MALIBU COMICS™
© SEGA 1992
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

PUBLISHER: Sega (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541593

Choose between two characters, but play by yourself

Easy, Medium and Hard, but you can't finish the game on easy

You start with three lives, but you can pick up more

No battery back-up and no password system

Nine scenes split into 12 stages

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 7

GAME SIZE 6

ADDICTION 8

> **"A great game: highly polished and very playable. It's quite tough too"**

81 PERCENT

Biff, socko, blott, blatt, ouch. These are just some of the corking words which Andy Dyer invented during a few fun-filled days with Muhammad Ali, a stoat called Susan and several cans of strong beer...

For starters I've got a slight problem with Muhammad Ali endorsing anything. I mean come on, during the course of his career Ali has had his brain transformed into a mushy pea-like substance which leaves him unable to hold a conversation with even the most verbally handicapped organism. It's almost as if his message to the world is: "Hey kids, climb in the ring. Have some big men hit you hard, repeatedly. Lose complete control over your verbal faculties and your legs. And (hey!) then encourage other little campers to go out and do exactly the same sort of thing". Do me a favour.

Anyway, Virgin reckon that this game will appeal to two different kinds of Mega Drive owner. The first variety doesn't give two hoots whether the game's about skeet shooting, toe-nail biting, crouton flicking or boxing; all they care about is that it's a frantic two-player button-bashing game. The second variety quite enjoy boxing (watching it on the television anyway) and fancy their chances against any like-minded person who can successfully grasp a joypad and who gets naturally excited at the ringside. To this end the game has two methods of play: arcade or simulation.

WHO'RE YOU CALLING SIMPLE?

The arcade game has simple controls, which ensure that it's a zappier experience than the simulation. In the arcade game you simply hit A to do jab, B to defend and C to hit hard. The direction controls propel your boxer around the ring and hopefully in the direction of your opponent. When you're close, you hit the button and this hopefully connects with the other chap's nostrils.

Now I say hopefully most advisedly because your opponent has the ability to duck and sway to the left and the right (he can also do a very convincing moonwalk across the ring, but that's not important right now). What's more, the other chap might choose the moment at which you swing to lob a fabric embroidered fist towards your head or kidneys.

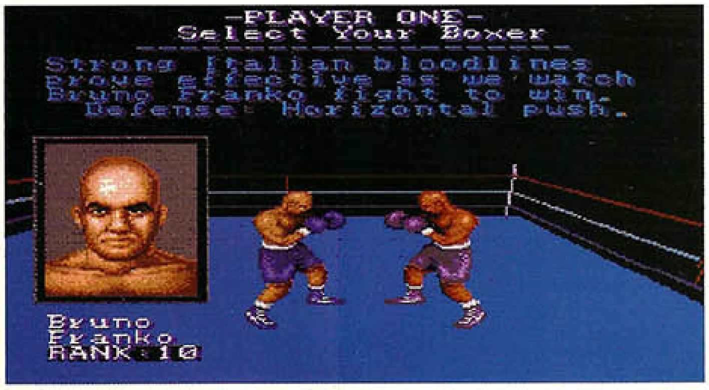
As a result of all this you'll soon discover that to beat the other chap you'll actually have to think a bit. Admittedly some of the lower ranking boxers can be taken out by repeatedly hitting the C key, but as you compete against the tougher chaps, you'll need to learn how to time your punches and when to duck. The idea is to exhaust the other chap's energy meter; get it down to zero and he hits the canvas.

If your two boxers get a bit too close to each other, then they'll grab each other. At this moment the ref will order you apart, because it's a boxing match not a leaning competition and you should take the opportunity to hit the other guy in the kidneys, jolly hard. Apart from this tip, there's not really much more you need to know before climbing into the boxing ring with a sour looking boxer.

Definitely a mid-week beer and pizza game

SIMULATION SUCCESS

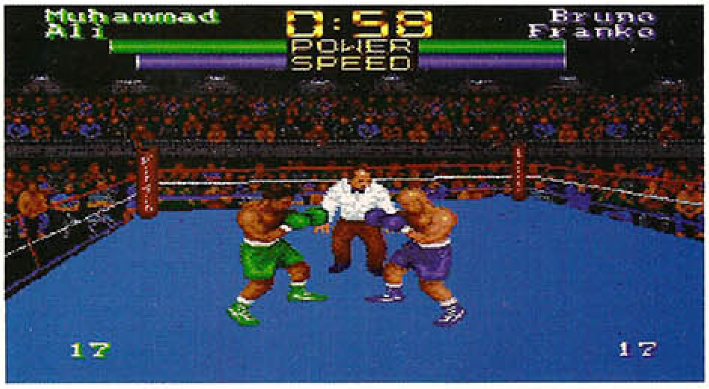
Now the simulation portion of the game is a lot more fun. To master this you'll have to play for a lot longer than five minutes. For starters, the controls are completely


-PLAYER ONE-
Select Your Boxer

Strong Italian bloodlines prove effective as we watch Bruno Franko fight to win. Defense: Horizontal push.

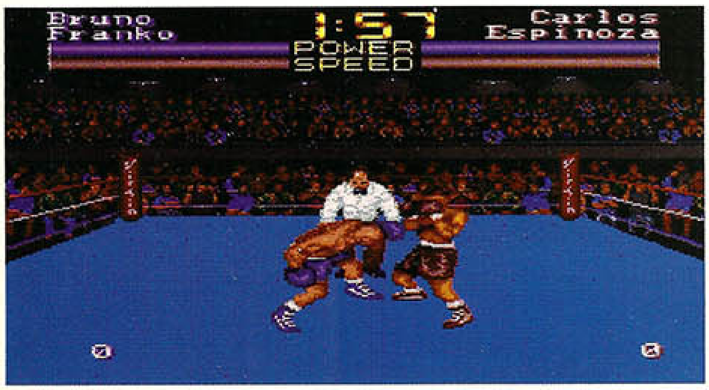
Bruno Franko
RANK: 10

Little did Bruno know that his unscrupulous manager, Barney Weasel, had lined up a fight with his twin brother, Bruno

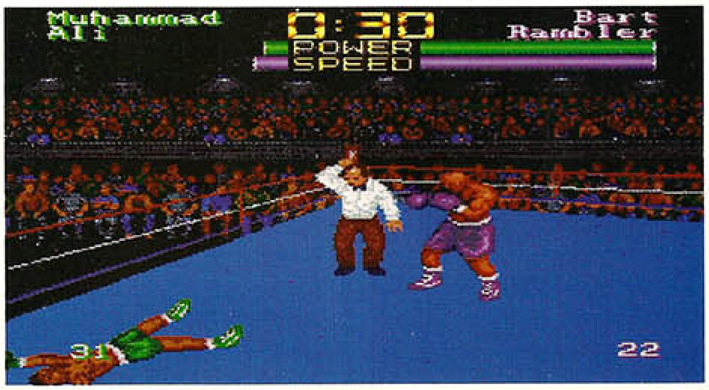


To save any further confusion Bruno elected to change his name to Ali and wear some rather vile green terylene shorts

MUHAMMAD A



Then, just one minute into the first round, Bruno decided to throw the first punch. Carlos pretended he couldn't see him, in the hope he would go away



"No wait," said Ali, "those main roof struts look really weird from this angle, especially if I move my head from side to side like this." The ref looked sad different, but there are also lots of subtleties to these matches which the arcade portion of the game lacks.

The principle control difference here is that to punch you have to hold down either the A, C or A and B buttons together and then tap the joypad in one of the four directions to determine how you punch. Thus you can direct a jab or hard punch to the head or midriff from underneath, above or the sides.

Frankly, the simulation portion of the game is a hell of a lot more fun than the arcade game. In the latter's case you spend a few minutes whacking the hell out of the joypad in the vain hope of hitting your opponent, but in the former you actually have to think about your punch, when to throw it and if you should duck or move out of the way after you've done so. The idea of course is to either win on points (these are displayed in the bottom left and right of the screen) or knock out your opponent.

KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

Now Virgin have added various options to the game, such as exhibition or tournament matches, but essentially all the options are the same. Perhaps the most pleasing aspect to the game is that while the console-controlled opponents are well weighted in terms of difficulty, it's when you play someone human that the game really comes alive.

It's one of those games which could quite easily turn into a boxing match off-screen, because as each of you gets hit you really start to feel for your little digital representation. You end up swearing at the other person, wrapping the lead from the joypad around their hands, pointing out interesting landmarks through the window (a cunning diversion), stamping on their feet, hitting them with a handy cushion and generally acting like the jolly bad sports we all are. Ermm, all in the hope of landing a flurry of punches. This is bad news of course, because the one and only secret to winning a boxing match is keeping your cool. Just ask Rodney King.

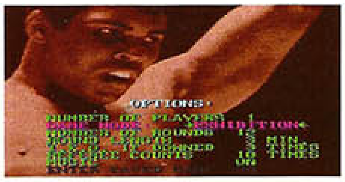
Now graphically the game's nothing brilliant. There are some pleasant touches, such as the way the ring slowly rotates while you play to show a different viewpoint, but the sprites aren't very detailed and things can slow down when you're doing a lot, but by and large it's all pretty simplistic. Sonically there are some nice samples in the game. My own personal favourites are the squelchy head-hit sound (which I'm sure is a sample of a jelly fish hitting a Marks and Spencer sherry trifle) and the chap in the crowd who mutters "He's down..." when one of you drops to the canvas to examine the stitching of the ring a bit better.

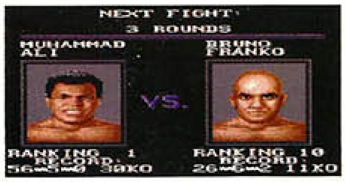
GIVE IT A BASH

This is definitely a mid-week beer and pizza game. It's one of those cartridges which you should get down from the shelf when you and your mates are too lazy to leave the house and nobody can be bothered to trek into town to hire out a dirty video.

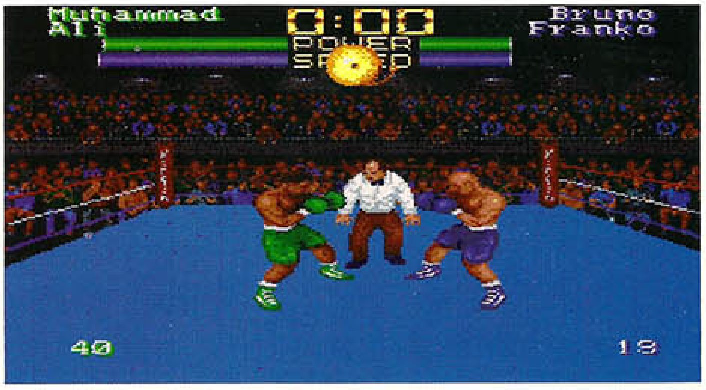
Muhammad Ali Boxing won't win any prizes for originality (come to think of it, neither would the beginning of this sentence), but it is a pleasing two-player game which is assured of a long shelf life. If you think your Harry Carpenter impression is up to scratch and your cushions can take the punishment, then check it out. It's sure as hell a lot more fun than taking part in the real thing, but it doesn't pay quite as well and won't improve your image in front of the chicks.

Ⓜ Andy Dyer



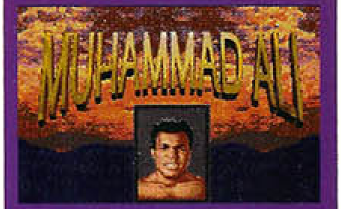


Options aplenty, but we couldn't find the hair restorer



Right chaps, can either of you explain why there's a huge golden orb hovering above my head? No? Damn

LI BOXING



PUBLISHER: Virgin

PRICE: ££39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Virgin 081 960 2255

Play against the console or grab a dim-looking friend to be your punch bag

There are ten ranked boxers to try to beat

You've only got the one life

The Tournament option has a password facility

No stages as such, but there are arcade and simulation options

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 8

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 8

"Smashing little prod-'em-up, especially in the two-player mode"

80 PERCENT

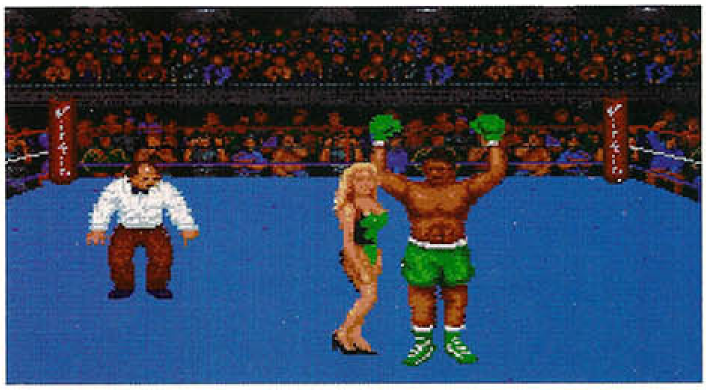
GET A GRIP!

⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ Moves your man around the ring

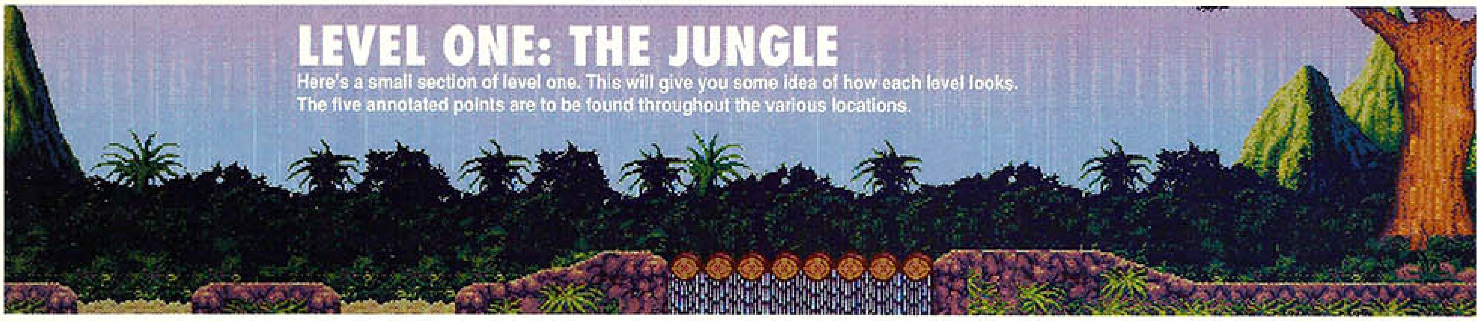
Ⓐ Jab (quick punch) at your opponent to give him a taste of what's really in store

Ⓑ Defend (stand back a bit and duck) yourself from the onslaught of your unfriendly opponent

Ⓒ Hit hard and loosen the dentures of that mother of all boxers

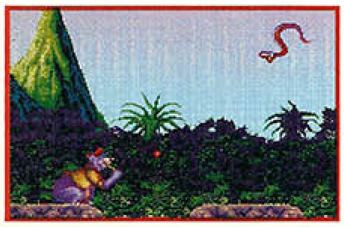


Melanie just had time to nip into the changing rooms and put on a swimsuit of exactly the same colour as Ali's trunks. The ref just shrugged and left

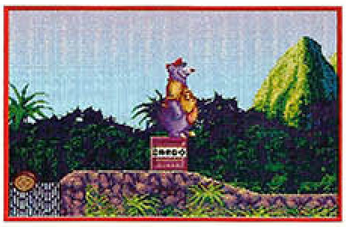


LEVEL ONE: THE JUNGLE

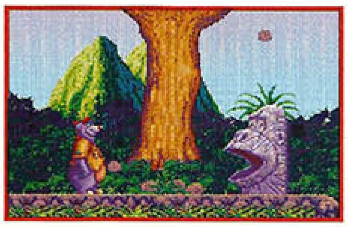
Here's a small section of level one. This will give you some idea of how each level looks. The five annotated points are to be found throughout the various locations.



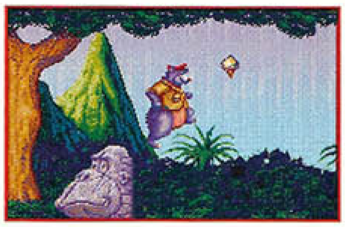
Get rid of jungle nasties with your weapon. Baloo combats this vicious snake by crouching it into submission. What a nerd!



Whenever Baloo (or Kit for that matter) comes across a crate, he needs to stand on it, then press button A to pick it up. Hurrah!



Baloo takes time off to stand and listen to Alberto, the famous singing stone primate. All together now, "Dude looks like a lady..."



And having tired of Alberto's awful rendition of that Aerosmith classic, Baloo buggers off to get himself a delicious floating ice cream

TALE SPIN

There's no beast and certainly no prince in here. Not surprising then that our resident beauty, Amanda Dyson, finds this latest Disney licence severely lacking

Not content with opening stores up and down the country, Disney are now knocking out software at a similar rate.

Their latest release is yet another Disney cartoon adventure (well, it wouldn't be anything else really, would it?). This time it's the turn of Tale Spin, the follow-up cartoon to the Jungle Book classic, starring good ol' Baloo the bear and his new side-kick Kit the monkey.

Tale Spin comes from the same mould as *World of Illusion*. It has all the usual Disney film licence ingredients: stonking looks, tuneful ditties, but very little in the way of gameplay.

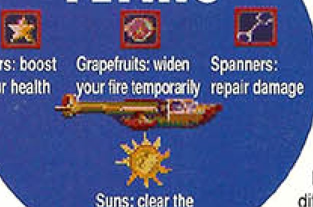
Anyway, let's see what this little number is all about. Baloo and Kit are battling it out with Shere Khan for a transport contract. This involves the likely lads partaking in a spot of globe-trotting. With the aid of their faithful old Sea Duck, they've got just seven days to grab enough cargo and so win the contract.

Now, it's up to you whether you want to go it alone, but be warned now, you'll get bored to tears on yer todd. The only way to play is to team up with a mate.

If you go for the "sad git with no friends" option, you can choose to play the part of either Baloo or Kit. It doesn't really matter which one you choose, because their character traits will only become apparent if you're playing the two-player game.

You begin your journey in a platform-style jungle. Here you must collect all the cargo; simply press Down and button A to pick up the boxes. There are ten boxes of cargo to be found on each level, and with eight different locations to visit, there's a lot of humping around to be done. The only weapons Baloo and Kit have to help them are Baloo's high-powered bat and ball

HIGH FLYING



Stars: boost your health

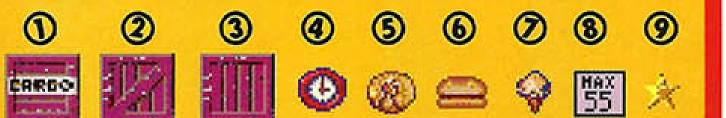
Grapefruits: widen your fire temporarily

Spanners: repair damage

Suns: clear the lightning cloud

THOSE BEAR NECESSITIES...

...the simple bear necessities, to help you forget about your worries and your strife. Here they are! You may think you could live without them, but they really are essential to your success. To find out why, looky here...



① Cargo boxes: you need ten of 'em to exit the level

② Empty boxes: useful for reaching high places

③ Power boxes: these release a helpful surprise

④ Clocks: these turn back time on your trip timer

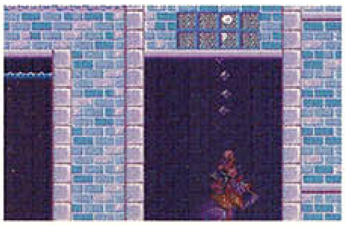
⑤ Lucky pennies: shield you temporarily from enemies

⑥ Hamburgers: give the old health level a boost

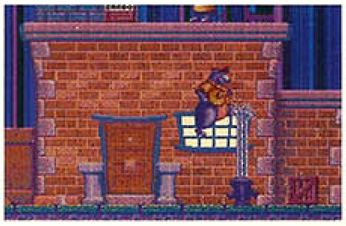
⑦ Ice creams: temporarily freeze your enemy

⑧ Speed limit signs: give you a short burst of speed

⑨ Stars: credit you with a generous extra try



It's all very well letting Kit lounge around on your shoulder blades, but you must watch out for the crabs



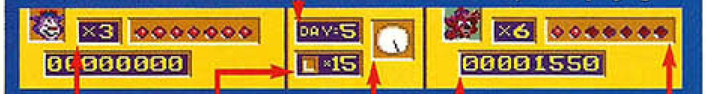
Jump onto this gushing fire hydrant for a quick lift up. Be careful, you can damage your health if splashed

What do you call a bear with a monkey on his face? Anything you like, he can't, um, er, see you. (Didn't really work did it Amanda? – Neil)

THE BITS AT THE BOTTOM

Here's a quick rundown of all the gubbins to be found at the bottom of your screen.

Baloo's information **DAYS: what's left of 'em** **Kit's info, if he's playing**



LIVES: Your days are numbered. Well they are here anyway

CARGO: Tells you how many crates you've grabbed

TRIP TIMER: The number of hours which are left in the day

SCORE: What you've managed to clock up so far

HEALTH: Dots start disappearing when you've taken a few blows. Watch it when you're moving underwater too

and Kit's catapult. To take a sure shot, just press button B. Once you've collected the cargo on a level, all that remains is the tedious stroll along to the exit.

After completing each location (level), you'll find yourself in the customs office. This is where you get to meet Disney's idea of an end-of-level boss. Shere Khan's planted one of his men there, and you'll have to defeat him before you can clear customs. A few bops on the nose should sort him out and once he's hit the deck, you can exit to the next level.

Your journey continues through seven more locations. Some of them are far too long for fat ol' Baloo or little Kit to walk, so they're stuck. End of game? Unfortunately not, because, amazingly, they can become high flyers.

BEARS MIGHT FLY

If your side-kick hasn't gone off and left you yet, Baloo gets to pilot a plane fitted with a grease gun, while Kit, still armed only with a catapult, tows behind on the airfoil and defends you both against enemy fire. There's plenty of falling cargo to collect, along with a couple of new power-ups.

That's about the gist of it really. I found it all rather dull really, but a younger player would probably find it entertaining, especially in two-player mode. It's advisable to stick together in this mode, however, because going it alone becomes virtually impossible when one of the characters (especially Baloo, because his bat and ball are more powerful than Kit's catapult) snuffs it.

There *are* some nice touches in here: Kit's jumping is fun and the way in which Baloo's weight sometimes restricts his progress through the game is a bit of a giggle.

This is, however, just another duff game in Disney wrapping. It has about as much get up and go as Baloo himself, and basically you would be better off spending your money on something, indeed anything, from your local Disney store

Ⓜ *Amanda Dyson*

Duff game in Disney wrapping

Looks like rain. Nothing that a bit of sun wouldn't sort out. That's if you can find one. Grab that spanner too

GET A GRIP!

- ↑ ↓ Makes you crouch. When flying, Up climbs and Down dives
- ← → Walks you left and right. Use Left to slow the plane down
- A Lets you drop empty boxes. Used with Down you can pick up cargo and boxes
- B Fires your weapon. Also used to fire when flying the plane
- C Lets you jump through some platforms. Used to level up the plane when flying

Calling me fat? I'll put this bat 'n' ball right where it hurts. Oi you, stop being so bloody nosey and clear my cargo. The Jungle Book was never like this

TALE SPIN
Press START
© 1992 The Walt Disney Company
© 1992 Sega

PUBLISHER: Sega (IMPORT)

PRICE: £35 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

Choose between Baloo or Kit, or grab a friend and use both

Three levels, with tougher enemies and less cargo on the harder levels

You get three tries, each try containing seven units of health

No passwords or battery back-up here, just a continue option

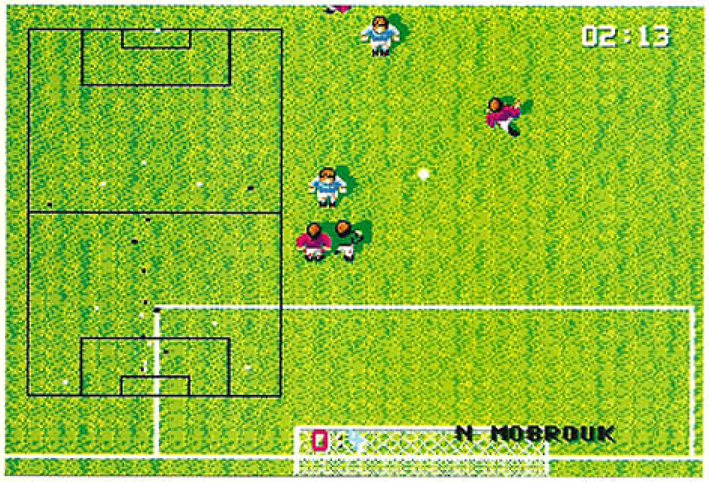
Eight countries to track through, each with a trip through customs, plus six planes to be chartered

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	4
GAME SIZE	4
ADDICTION	4

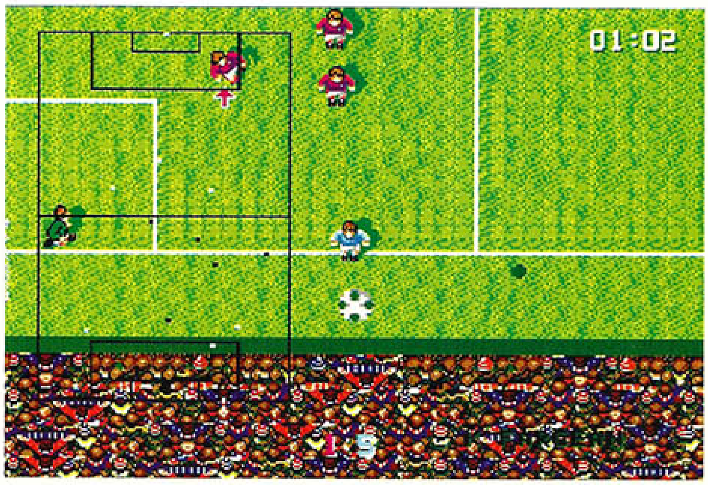
"Never judge a cart by its cover. No real challenge to be found here. Well suited to the younger gamesplayer"

52 PERCENT

SUPER KI



The goodies (that's my team, that is) are in perfect scoring position. Pity it's going to end in failure because the opposition's goalie is so good



Sometimes it's necessary to do a massive clearance. But beware – the Mega Drive team is exceptional at taking corners, so don't do it all the time

Right. We need a review of *Super Kick Off*. It's got to be done by someone with style, wit and an amazing knowledge and feel for football. Neil West is just the man. Well, he's a Bristol Rovers fan, anyway. That'll do...

OK. I'm an expert, but we'll start at the beginning for all you dweeboids who haven't a clue. There are 22 men, 11 in each team, and there's this weird quasi-spherical object, traditionally made of a pig's scooped out organ.

A goal, made of pine, mahogany or any Afro-European hardwood stands at either end of the pitch, which is usually covered with short grass (genus herba) and marked with white lines to denote the two-dimensional restrictions on the playing area. Each player is by tradition a human, (genus homo sapiens), which, on a simple level, is a unique collection of DNA helixes with... (Oh, why don't you just get on with the bloody review, you poncy git? – Andy)

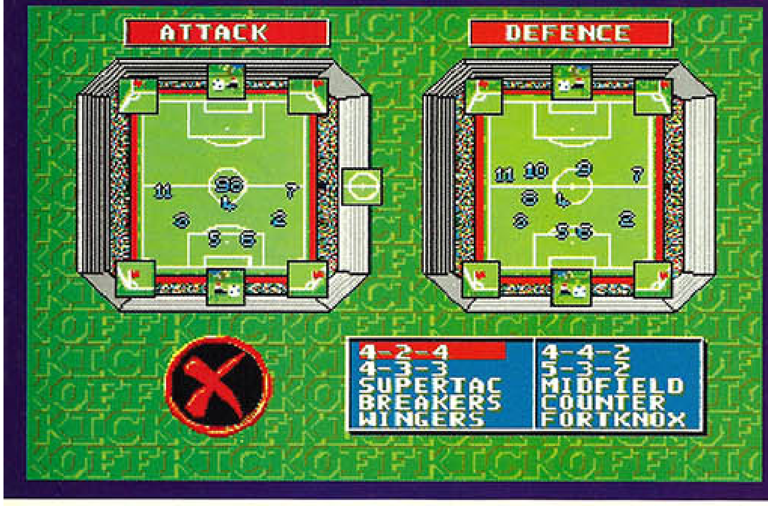
Yeah, right. You can play any European team in *Super Kick Off*. It does matter considerably which team you choose, as the crap ones (like Wales) run slowly and pass badly, while the good ones, like AC Milan and, if they'd bothered to include it, Bristol Rovers do everything extremely well.

TEAM TACTICS

Obviously, the major attraction with the game is that you get to choose from a host of teams which have varying skills and tactics. And instead of just seeing all the players haring off up the pitch after the unfortunate bloke who happened to accidentally trap the ball, you can actually sort out your playing styles properly.

Of course, *Kick Off* has been around for aeons on all those old-fashioned computery formats, and pretty popular it's

LET'S TRY A NEW POSITION TONIGHT, DEAR



The position possibilities in *Super Kick Off* are endless. Well, if not endless, then there are lots of them anyway. This game allows you to set up your team to counter the opposition in quite specific ways.

If your men are fast, using wingers is a good idea because you get to zoom the ball straight up the pitch ready to cross it to the strikers.

If they're slow, simply pile loads of men forward in a 5-3-2 formation and hope the opposition don't break away.

And the greatest thing about all these tricks and tactics? They actually do seem to make a difference to the run of play. Changing formation will change your team's performance. So, we suggest that US Gold get a copy of the game in the post to Graham Taylor tonight.

Yes indeed, the formation options in this game could even teach England's manager a thing or two. But then, so could a small stoat

GET A GRIP!

↑ ↓ ← → Moves your selected player around in roughly these directions

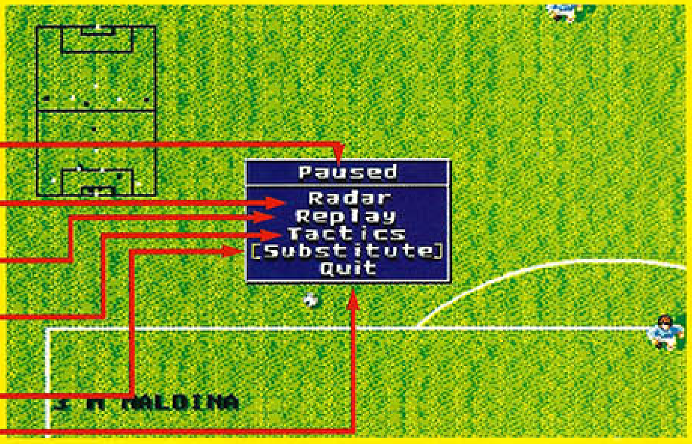
Ⓐ Gives you a short tap

Ⓑ Gives you a decent welly, which is useful for passing

Ⓒ Gives you a blaster, guaranteed to destroy the goalkeeper's ribs

CK OFF

FROM THE KICK-OFF



When you pause the game you get a message box on the screen

Radar: Changes the size of the radar on the left

Replay: Allows you to see again the last few seconds of action

Tactics: Lets you change the formations you're using

Substitute: Lets you pilot a helicopter over Vietnam (well what do you think it means?)

Quit: For when you've had enough

been too. But on the Mega Drive, it's just so much better than on any other format. The joypad is ideal for controlling your players, and you'll find you can dodge, jink, run and dribble with astonishing ease. And the top-down view, with the scrolly pitch and the little radar, is really rather cuddly as well.

But hold on. There's a bit of an annoyance here as well. Sometimes the arrow which shows you who you're currently controlling doesn't seem to be making the right decisions, and you end up having full control over a bloke who's several yards from the guy with the ball (who's also on your team). This isn't a major point, and it sorts itself out in a fraction of a second, but the delay might just be long enough to cause you to muff that vital shot which would have given you victory over Real Madrid and the chance of a knighthood in the New Year's Honours List, plus a trout farm in Kent and all the adoring babes you could handle.

As well as the standard business of playing each game, you've got the option to have a bit of a practice (or a kickabout, as we experts call it). You can scoot the ball around an empty pitch and take loads of free kicks from any position you like. Once you've decided the most attractive place from which you want to shoot (and it needn't be near to the enemy goal) you just hit button B and everybody (both teams, in other words) comes tumbling onto the pitch to assume their positions. The baddies line up and, presumably, cross their hands to protect their dangly bits (the resolution of the screen isn't quite good enough to see them doing this, though). Then you just whack away at the ball.

> **This is, to date, the very best version of *Kick Off***

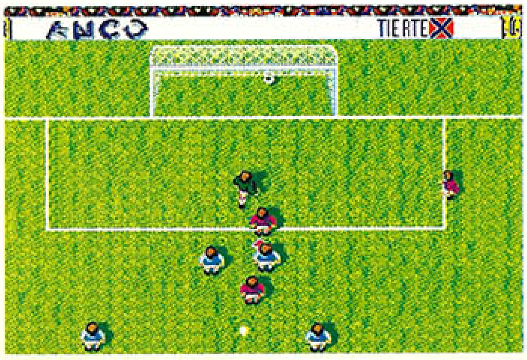
BABES, MEDALS AND POINTLESS NAMES

You can also take part in your very own penalty shoot-outs. Yes, you've guessed it; the ball is placed lovingly on the correct spot, then a cursor thing slides up and down forever, unless you hit a button. The trick is to tap the button at exactly the right moment, thus scoring a goal and earning yourself more babes, medals and a Ferrari Testarossa in racing red complete with...

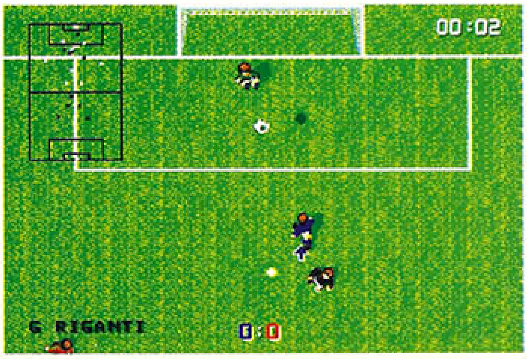
Anyway, the only things which spoil the game slightly are the made-up names for all the players. These appear at the bottom of the screen during the match, and are really rather pointless when you consider that you'll have heard of none of them.

But, despite this, what do I reckon? Well, it's the best version of *Kick Off* to date, but that's what you'd expect from the Mega Drive really, wouldn't you? It's also a pretty fab footy game in its own right. It's fast and a bit tricky to master, but if you give it a bit of time, you'll be laughing.

® *Neil West*



The goalkeeper legs it back to the net in order to prevent that vital, well, goal, I suppose



The tension mounts. Wait until the goalie blinks then hit all the buttons at once. Never fails (almost)

SUPER
KICK OFF

PUBLISHER: US Gold

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: March '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: US Gold 021 625 3388

One or two players

Each team has a different level of skill

It's football, so there are no lives

No battery back-up or passwords necessary, really

There are three tournaments to play through

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 6

GAMEPLAY 8

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 8

"This is a pretty damned OK football game. There's a reasonable amount of control in here, and the players seem slightly more intelligent than most (in real life, that is)"

79 PERCENT

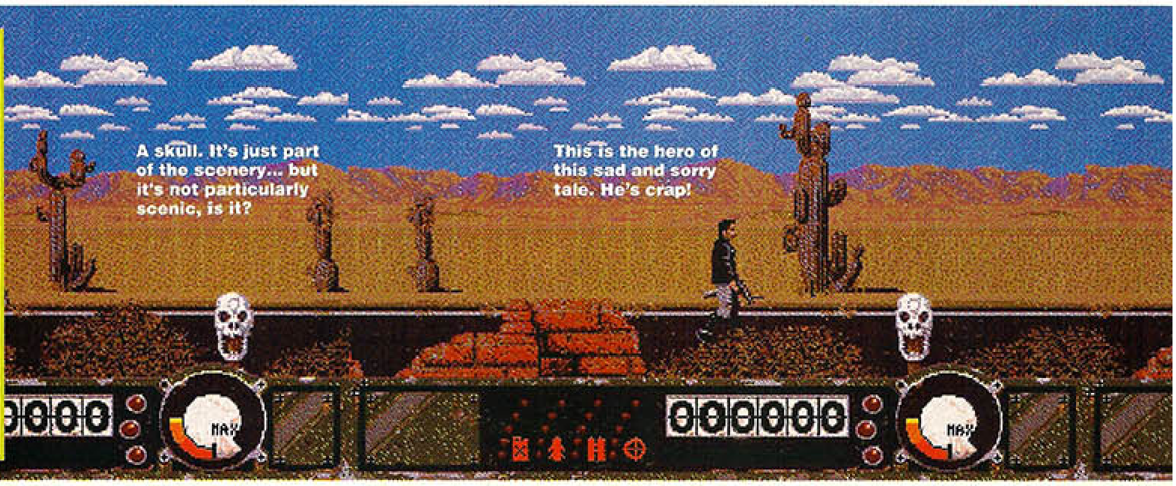
GET A GRIP!

↑ ↓ ← → Steers the car and moves bloke around

Ⓐ This puts the brakes on and is used with B and C for nitro boost

Ⓑ This speeds up the car and is used with A and C for nitro boost

Ⓒ Fires the gun and is used with A and B for the nitr... well, you know the rest



A skull. It's just part of the scenery... but it's not particularly scenic, is it?

This is the hero of this sad and sorry tale. He's crap!

Andy Dyer's always fancied being Mad Max. He didn't get much joy in his Chevette, and he's definitely not going to cut a dash in this game

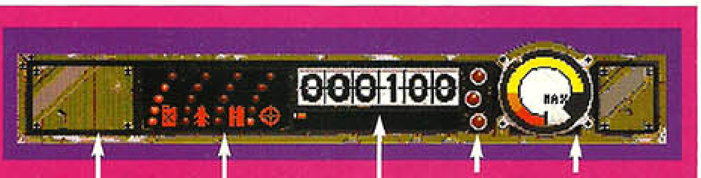
OUTL

Never before have I read such an elaborate plot for such a straightforward pile of cack. The story goes something like this: The world has been ravaged by a (yawn) nuclear holocaust and (zzzzz) the human race has all but died out. However (snooze), the few remaining survivors are getting water from the seas, taking all the salt out and scraping a meagre existence out of the disaster.

However, the ice caps are growing, and therefore locking up all the water supplies. So it's pretty good news when a scientist discovers a way of creating almost unlimited amounts of fresh water. Great, so now this revolution can be spread around the globe and all will be well again. Alas no, the professor's plane is shot down over Australia and he's kidnapped by a load of bikers who want to rule the world. Enter our mercenary hero (that'll be you then) who drives across Australia (à la Mad Max) and tries to save the prof, and thus the world.

MAD DASH

No road vehicle would be complete without a dash. Ever since the car was conceived there has always been a dashboard. So popular is this in-car accessory that poems, sonnets and even songs have been written praising the virtues of dashboard technology. Sadly, that thing on the right isn't actually the dashboard, making this paragraph totally irrelevant.



A small green box. It does, er, "things"

Fuel, missiles, nitro and ammo

Displays the score and hand-gun ammo

Shows the amount of energy you have

This is the Geiger counter window (?)

HIGHWAY TO HELL

At first sight, the graphics may well grab you and make you sit up and take notice. While slightly blocky, the scaling of the various sprites is really rather impressive. The bikers approach with alarming speed (and not a little menace) and they invariably either attack or explode in a spectacular fashion. Tragically though, this initial buzz wears off within about five minutes when you realise the long tedious haul you're experiencing in level one is a good indicator of things to come.

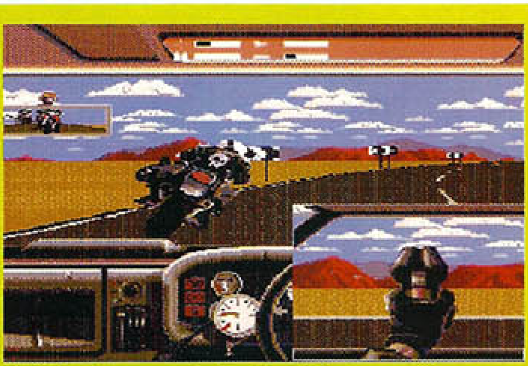
For a start, the first driving level is not only easy, but it goes on forever. After shooting about three billion adversaries off their bikes, you really wish it would all come to an end, as, indeed, it eventually does. Your car decides it's had enough and slows to a halt. Then the game switches to a horizontally scrolling shooty, beat-'em-up type of thing. Your blokey is now on foot and has to walk along the road, punching and shooting people off their bikes as they try to hit you with chains on their way past.

It's a nice idea having two very distinct game styles in the one package, but they really shouldn't have bothered with this beat-'em-up bit at all. It's complete crap. The main character moves very awkwardly and unconvincingly, and the duck, punch, shoot formula is as primitive as it is dull.

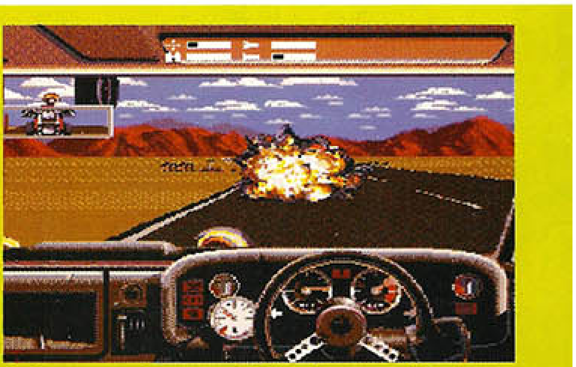
There's really no excuse for rubbish like this these days. What we have in the Mega Drive is a state of the art 16-bit

EASY RIDING

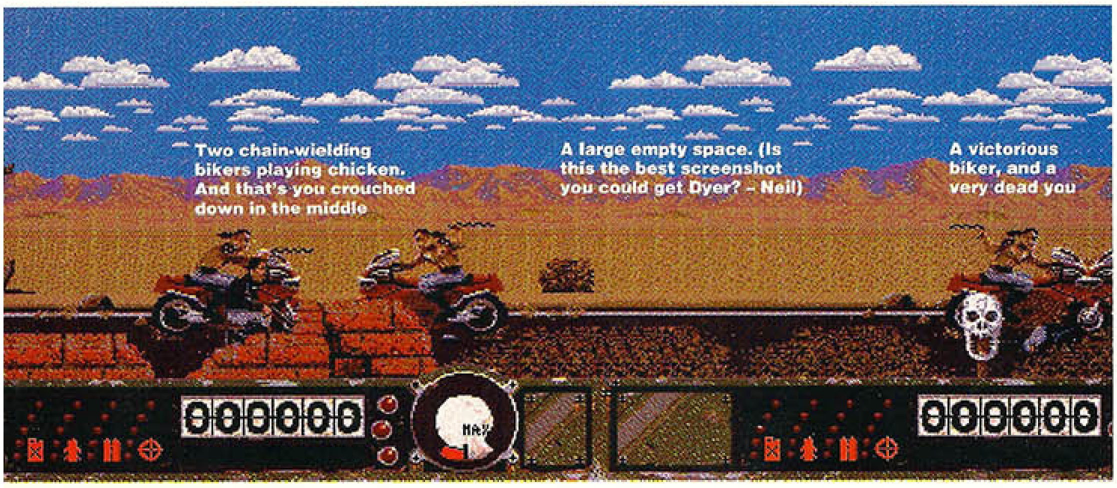
Things are none too pleasant in Australia after the holocaust. Not only is the weather a trifle warm, the place is also populated by lunatic bikers, who try to shove, bomb and shoot you off the road. You have a mirror in the car so that you can see big beefy bikers approaching from behind, and whenever an opponent pulls up alongside, a small window opens up to show the side view. You can then, by pressing fire, blast the blighters into oblivion using your shotgun. Any bikers in front of you can be dispatched in two ways. Either ram them, or use the machine gun which is mounted at the front of the car. But whichever method you choose, it all has to be done rather quickly or else they'll drop a few bombs and you'll be out of the game in no time. Let's take a closer look shall we?



Well, there's no one to the side of the car, so I'll concentrate on ramming that blokey up front



And sure enough, moments later, i've spread his atoms all over Australia (with help from my machine gun)



Two chain-wielding bikers playing chicken. And that's you crouched down in the middle

A large empty space. (Is this the best screenshot you could get Dyer? – Neil)

A victorious biker, and a very dead you

ANDER

games console, and what we have in *Outlander* is a game that, gameplaywise, could quite easily have appeared five years ago to a lukewarm reception. There is no place for such poor quality games. It's fine to occasionally come across an average game that's no worse, or no better, than a previous title, but it baffles me that anyone can actually produce something so bad without realising the fact.

> **There is no place for such poor quality games**

SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED

Basically, what we have here is a pretty hot graphical engine (as I said, the visuals are at first quite impressive), but without the support of any gameplay, pace, difficulty curve, fun, enjoyment, variety... it's hopeless. Well, I really have to say, most definitely, that this just isn't good enough. We're in an industry in which every single product costs £40 or above to buy. These products are, for the large part, being bought by kids, who can't afford to waste £40. What's more, it's unfortunately a self-governing industry, so this kind of cack will continue to be churned out. It would be nice to be able to rely on the producers own quality control, but this game is a fine example of the kind of rubbish that can get through the system. It is then down to us magazine game reviewers to ensure that the public know exactly what they're getting, before they cough up for it.

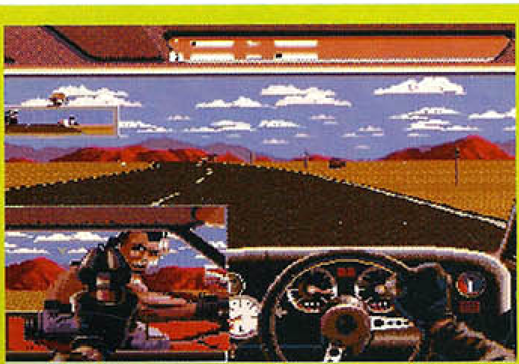
Sorry to rant on, but there's no excuse whatsoever for unadulterated tosh like this. Er, that's it. Thank you for your time, and, um, avoid this game at all costs. It would be the worst spent £40 of your life.

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*

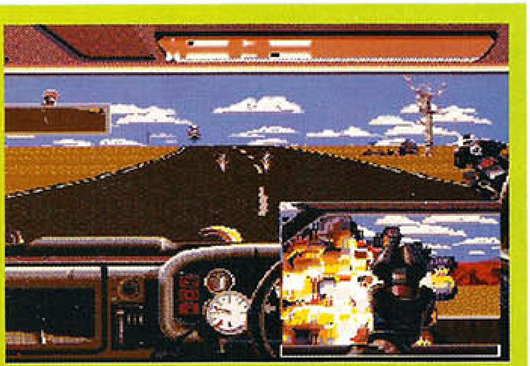
THEN AGAIN...

***Road Rash 2*: the only road combat game worth looking at**

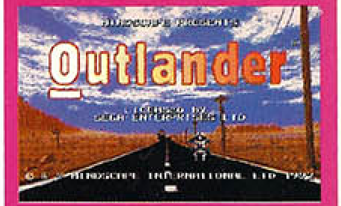
Of course, if vehicular violence is your cup of tea, there really is only one game to get, and *Outlander* ain't it. *Road Rash 2* is the fellow you want. It's fast, it's furious, and unlike *Outlander*, it's very controllable and more importantly good fun. *Outlander* isn't any good as a racing game or a combat game. *Road Rash 2*, however, literally shines in both areas.



That ugly mother on the left won't look quite so hard when I blow his head clean off with this shotgun



And here's one I blasted earlier. As you can see, sideways shooting is, well, fairly effective



PUBLISHER: Mindscape (IMPORT)
PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

Only one player, I'm afraid

And, believe it or not, there's only one level of skill

Ah ha, only one life

No battery back-up and no password system

There are 28 regions through which to battle

GRAPHICS 6
●●●●●●○○○○

SOUND 4
●●●●○○○○○○

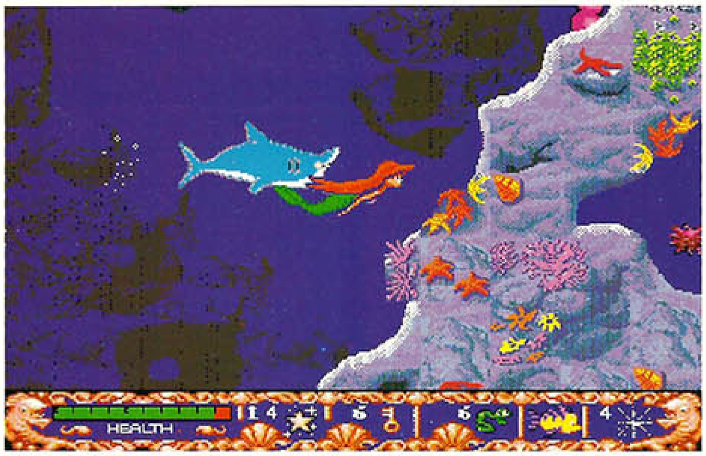
GAMEPLAY 3
●●●○○○○○○○

GAME SIZE 5
●●●●●○○○○○

ADDICTION 2
●●○○○○○○○○

"Graphically impressive at first sight, but minutes later you'll realise this is one of the worst games you've ever played"

20 PERCENT



Look out Ariel! That shark looks hungry and right now it looks like it fancies a fish supper. Swim baby, swim...

It might be the latest big Disney licence release, but Paul Mellerick just finds this game too similar, although greatly inferior, to *Ecco The Dolphin*. Move over little mermaid...

ARIEL
THE LITTLE MERMAID

Sometimes Sega *really* puzzle me. Take a look on pages 42, 43 and 44 and you'll see a game called *Ecco*. It's an amazing game, great graphics, fab animation, involving gameplay, great to listen to, easy to control, with 27 large levels and a password system. It really is a classic game.

The reason I'm telling you this is because on first sight *Ariel The Little Mermaid* looks very similar to *Ecco*. But play it for a few minutes and you'll soon realise something has gone terribly wrong.

AN ECHO OF *ECCO*

The basic game idea is the same as *Ecco's*, only on a smaller scale. You've got to search through four levels of underwater scenery to reach the ultimate goal of rescuing your father Triton from the clutches of Ursula, the evil Sea Witch. To complete each level you must collect all the little sea creatures called polyps. These are in fact your own Merpeople, who have been magically altered by Ursula. Walk over them and they'll turn back into their old selves.

You can use weapons to help you battle against the various underwater creatures and you can also enlist the aid of three types of fish if you come up against anything difficult in the game.

Each level is mapped out, and the flashing white dots are the polyps. You must work your way around each maze, collect all the polyps and then fight the level boss.

You can, if you choose, reverse the roles and play the game as Triton, and try to rescue your daughter, Ariel. The game scenery is exactly the same, however, so there really isn't much point.

When you access the map, by pressing start, you'll find that although it looks very big, it is actually quite small. And the mazes (if you can call them that) don't tax the grey matter at all. Controlling Ariel (or Triton) is very easy; there's no inertia or any currents to battle against, it's just a simple eight-way control system.

CUTE BUT TOOOO EASY

The graphics and sound are OK and the Ariel and Triton sprites are nicely animated. All the sea creatures look menacing enough and from this everything would seem to be hunky-dory. But play the game, and you'll probably walk straight through it. The four levels are small and there's no challenge until you get to the end boss. Even then it's just a simple matter of firing all your weapons, taking a few hits and moving onto the next stage.

If you do lose all your energy, you don't die, you just lose a life and your health bar goes back up to full. This means that you can stand in front of a level boss, keep firing and although your health bar might decrease, you will still kill him. And with five lives, and continues as well, it won't take long to finish.

Sega must be aiming this game directly at younger players, because the graphics and sound remain very close to the film, and even inexperienced gamers will find this lacking in challenge.

If you're after a cute, water-related game, no matter what age you are, then go for *Ecco* instead. It's a lot nicer, will last you a long time and it shows that when Sega put there minds to it, they can produce great software. *Ariel*, on the other hand, shows that they can produce some really horrible stuff as well.

® *Paul Mellerick*

> **You'd be better off with *Ecco***

GET A GRIP!

Ⓤ Ⓓ Ⓛ Ⓡ Moves Ariel or Triton around the scenery

Ⓢ Pauses the game, by showing you the entire map

Ⓐ Fires your main weapon

Ⓑ Fires you special weapon

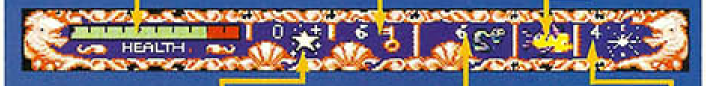
Ⓒ Uses one of your fish friends

WHAT'S THAT FOR THEN?

Your health bar decreases whenever you get hit

You will need a key to open a treasure chest

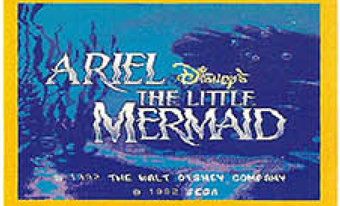
Use your fish friend if you come across a difficult bit



Be careful with your Super Weapon; you'll need it for the bosses

How many Merpeople you've got left to rescue... six

How many lives you've got left... in this instance five



PUBLISHER: Sega (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

You can choose Ariel or Triton, but it's only a one-player game

Easy, Normal or Hard, but there's no challenge here

You start with five lives

There's no battery back-up or even a password because...

... there are only four small levels to get through

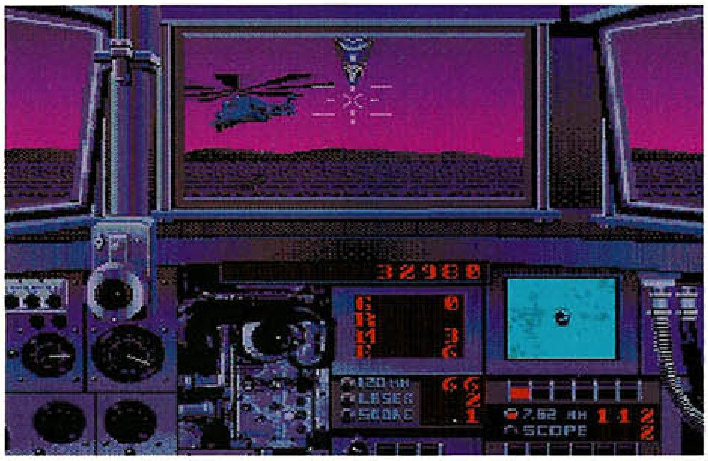
GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	5
GAME SIZE	2
ADDICTION	4

> **"It's too small, too slow, too boring and it's all over too quickly"**

44 PERCENT

SUPER BATTLETANK

The following conversation was recorded by the hidden microphone of Paul Mellerick, in the office of the Joint Chief of Staffs, USA. This message will never self-destruct...



You've selected your 7.62 mm cannon and you're chasing a chopper. You're still moving though, so make sure you don't drive into something dangerous (like a minefield) or something silly (like an episode of Family Fortunes)

President: "So what do you think we should do this weekend then Mr Joint Chief?"
Chief: "Oh, I don't know... fancy invading a small third world country?"
President: "No, we did that last year and look what happened. We spent all that money, and we didn't even get cheap oil from it. Tell you what, why don't we play that new game, *Super Battletank: War in the Gulf*? I mean, it's got loads of digitised footage, and it puts you in charge of a M1A1 Abrams Battletank and it hasn't got ol' Stormin' in it."
Chief: "Yeah, that sounds like my kind of game, especially the bit about Stormin'. Tell me more..."
President: "Well, it's a bit complex."
Chief: "Oh, go on, we've still got the rest of this page to fill. And it's not like I'm the Vice-President."
President: "OK, but stick with me, because it gets a bit heavy. Right, there are ten missions, which are all set in the Persian Gulf and you, using just your tank, have got to complete these missions and do your bit to help win the war. You view the action as if you were sitting in the driver's seat looking out of the window and from there you control all the actions of the tank."
Chief: "What, you mean just from one control pad, you can use the whole of the tank's weapon systems? The laser guided shells? The 120 mm cannon? *And* the Smoke Screen?
President: "Yep, all from the comfort of your own armchair. And the best thing about it is that it's all very easy to control. You use the control pad to move the crosshair around when you're firing at a target, and by using it in conjunction with the Start button you can alter the speed of the tank. All the buttons are used well too. Button A will fire your selected weapon, button B will select your weapon, and button C will bring up the mission map. So all the time, you know where you are, where you're going and what's about to hit you."
Chief: "Sounds great... a bit too great."
President: "Ooh, you old cynic. Actually the whole game is very good. The missions get tougher as you progress, and the digitised graphics are great, the sounds are also digitised and they're great too. You can see what's going on from one look at your control panel and you're *always* in control. Obviously this game isn't going to appeal to everyone, but if you're looking for something very different from the usual platform game, and tanks are your thing, *Super Battletank: War in the Gulf* is a must."
Chief: "Hey, that sounded really good, you should work for a magazine."
President: "Maybe I should. Anyway do you think he got all that?"
Chief: "Who?"
President: "The person who was taping this conversation, that's who..."

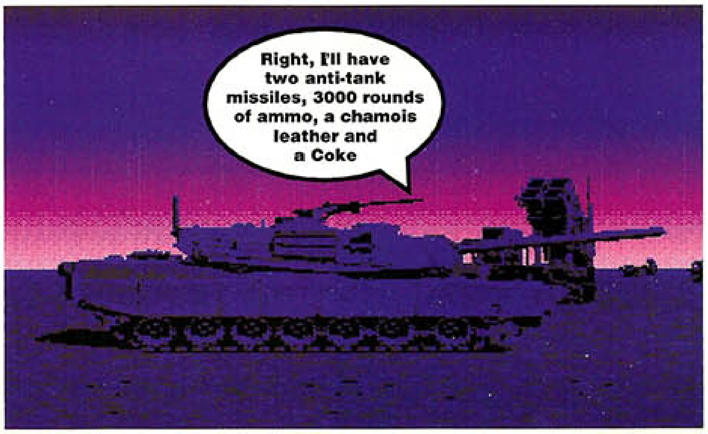
> **"You're always in total control"**

Paul Mellerick

(Any "comedy" in this review is the strict copyright of Paul Mellerick, and has nothing to do with MEGA as a whole – Neil)

GET A GRIP!

- Ⓢ ⇧ ⇩ Alters the speed of your battletank
- ⇧ ⇩ Moves your crosshair around the screen
- ⇦ ⇨ Steers your tank around the various battle grounds
- Ⓐ Fires your selected weapon
- Ⓑ Selects your weapon
- Ⓒ Brings up the mission map


Right, I'll have two anti-tank missiles, 3000 rounds of ammo, a chamois leather and a Coke

Drive into the allied bases and you can refuel and repair your tank. Definitely a worthwhile cause. Don't suppose there's any chance of a bottle of Grolsch

Garry Kitchen's
SUPER BATTLETANK ™
WAR IN THE GULF
COPYRIGHT 1992
ABSOLUTE ENTERTAINMENT INC.
PRESS START

PUBLISHER: Absolute (IMPORT)
PRICE: £40 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541593

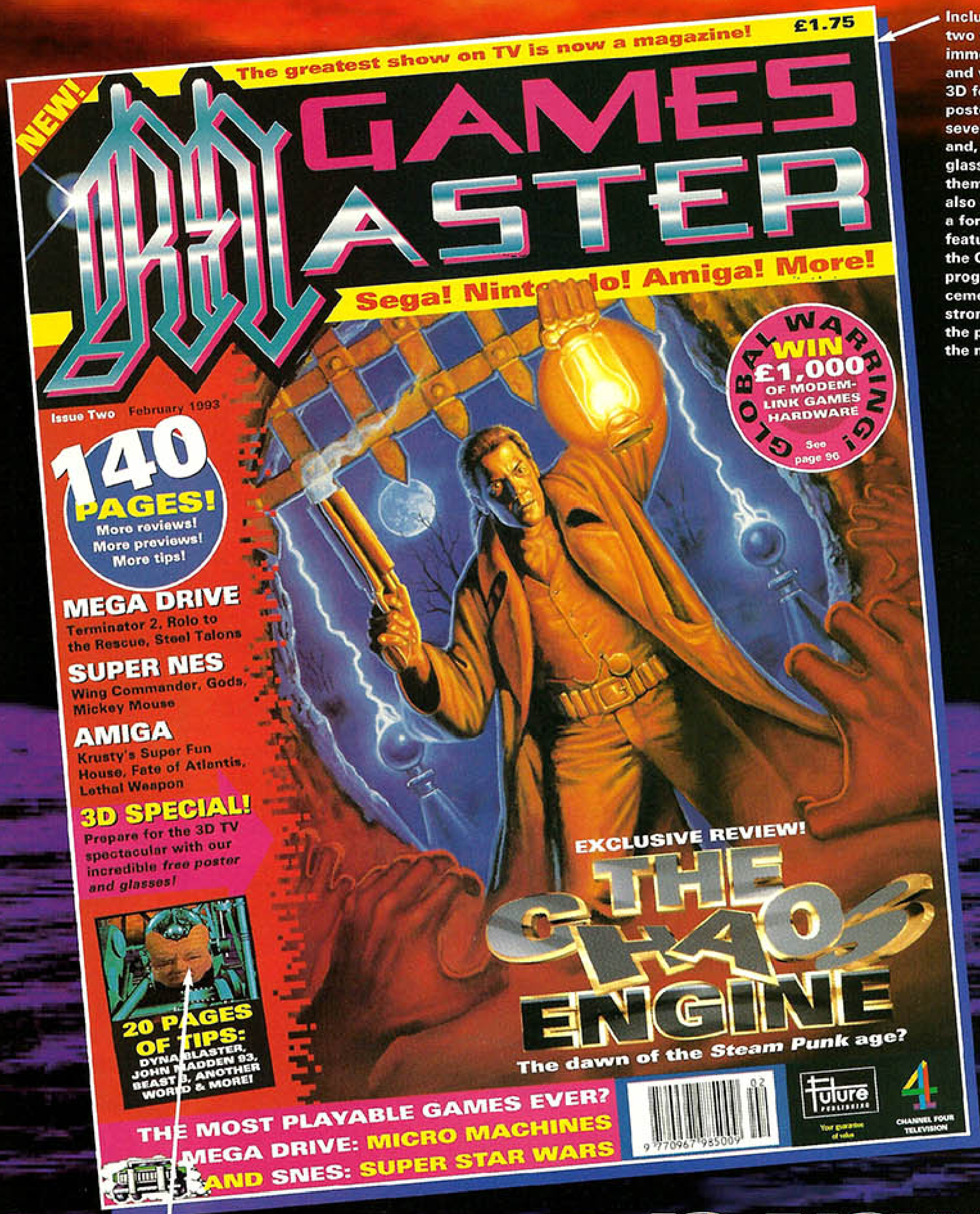
- It's a small tank, so only one person can fit in it
- No skill levels as such – the missions just get harder
- You've got only one life, but you can continue forever
- No password or battery back-up – that would make things too easy
- There are ten missions to complete

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	6
GAME SIZE	5
ADDICTION	7

> **"A strange game; sort of strategy/blaster. Very well done and easy to play, but it won't appeal to everyone"**

80 PERCENT

THE GREATEST SHOW ON TV...



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Issue Two February 1993

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SUPER NES Wing Commander, Gods, Mickey Mouse

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EXCLUSIVE REVIEW! THE CHAOS ENGINE

The dawn of the *Steam Punk* age?

THE MOST PLAYABLE GAMES EVER? MEGA DRIVE: MICRO MACHINES AND SNES: SUPER STAR WARS

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CHANNEL FOUR TELEVISION

Included with issue two you'll find an immensely pleasant and very high quality 3D feature. There's a poster, complete with several 3D images, and, of course, the glasses to go with them. These glasses also tie in neatly with a forthcoming 3D feature to appear on the GamesMaster TV programme, thus cementing the already strong link between the popular show and the magazine.

It's crazy, it really is. Just look at how much has been crammed into this already over-large magazine. All the news from the entire industry, as well as the best in reviews, previews and of course numerous appearances by that self-styled wizard of the code, the GamesMaster. There's so much going on, it'll make your nose bleed.

...IS NOW ON PAPER!

ROLO TO THE RESCUE
GAMES MASTER TIP
FOR - MEGA DRIVE
FROM - ELECTRONIC ARTS
AVAILABLE - JANUARY
PRICE - £40
MEMORY - 8MEGS
STOP
OPTIONS - NONE
LEVELS - LOADS
DIFFICULTY - OK/HARD
PLAYERS - ONE
SAVE GAME - NO
END
GRAPHICS
SOUNDS
PLAYABILITY
LASTABILITY
OVERALL
JUDGEMENT
84%
REVIEWS (MEGA DRIVE)
66
67

We won't just tell you what we think of the newest games, we'll take them apart for you. In GamesMaster you'll see the best bits, the worst bits and the bits no-one else can get to. Our team is the finest, and we also call on the top guest reviewers from other mags. You can't fail with us.

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We'll be reporting on both official and grey import releases, and giving a full release schedule for the whole of 1993.
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SECOND ISSUE IS ON SALE THURSDAY 21ST JANUARY

GAMESMASTER

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Your guarantee of value

MEGA PLAY

With more than a little help from our lovely readers, Paul Mellerick provides another batch of tips. If MEGA PLAY doesn't include any tips for your favourite games, however, take a look at page 64 onwards

Sonic 2

There have been lots of tips sent in about *Sonic 2*, but most of them don't seem to work. This one, however, does. Go to the options screen and start the game as Sonic and Tails together. Now plug in a second joypad and player two will be able to control Tails. Tails is also invincible, so Sonic can let him do all the hard work.

Stephen Gray, Grantham, Lincs and Thomas Waller, Duston, Northampton

BULLS VS LAKERS

You can enter passwords until you're blue in the face, but with a password breaker you are really laughing. So start laughing now, because a password breaker is exactly what we've got here.

Use the table below, and the following code, to work out which team you want to play as and which team you want to oppose, and then you will find yourself in the final with a 3-0 lead. Remember though, that you can only play Eastern vs Western, or Western vs Eastern.

Enter (opposition code), (your team code) then 0GPBBB. Having entered all that, you will find yourself 3-0 up and you should be able to become the overall winners. Then you can look forward to the awards ceremony, where you'll be crowned as champions. Aren't we nice to you?

OPPOSITION

Eastern	Western
B – Bucks	V – Golden State
C – Bulls	W – Blazers
D – Celtics	X – Lakers
F – Pistons	Y – Spurs
P – 76ers	I – Houston
R – Hawks	3 – Phoenix
9 – Pacers	9 – Utah Jazz
M – Seattle	

YOUR TEAM

Eastern	Western
D – Bucks	6 – Golden State
X – Bulls	B – Blazers
N – Celtics	L – Lakers
S – Pistons	G – Spurs
8 – 76ers	Z – Phoenix
4 – Hawks	V – Utah Jazz
J – Knicks	2 – Houston
0 – Pacers	Q – Seattle

Neil Reive, Lockerbie, Dumfrieshire

TIPS DIRECTORY

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Alien Storm 63
Bart Vs The Space Mutants 61
Bulls Vs Lakers 60
California Games 62
Cyberball 63
Deadly Moves 63
Dragon's Fury 63
Euro Club Soccer 60
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Galares 63
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Greendog 63
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Quackshot 63
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Super Monaco GP 2 63
Super Thunderblade 62
Taz-Mania 63
Terminator 2 .... 61 and 73
Thunderforce IV 63
World of Illusion .... 61 and 62
World Trophy Soccer 63

If you're looking for a tip for a specific game and it isn't listed above, turn to page 64 of this very issue of MEGA and you'll find the TIPS LIST, ie four pages of tips for over 150 Mega Drive games. Wow, that's really something, huh?

Euro Club Soccer

There have been more than enough codes printed for this game, so how about some playing tips instead? OK then, your wish is our command.

Throw-ins (defending): Stand next to the referee and you'll usually get to the ball first.

Throw-ins (attacking): Aim just between the goalie and the post or directly at the keeper to score.

Time Wasting: If you get a free kick or throw-in and want to waste time, don't press anything or make a substitution.

Formations: All-round strength is yours if you use a 1-3-3-3 formation.

Penalties: Press C and Left or Right to score. In shoot-outs press B, B, B, C then B for five out of five.

Free Kicks: To win a free kick, run into a sliding player.

Corners: Aim for the far post, press C to lob the ball, and then run your players at the ball to knock it over the line.

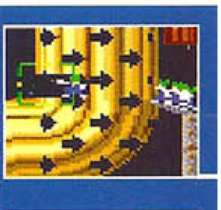
J Ratcliffe, Runcorn, Cheshire

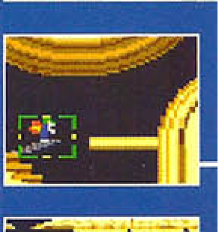
LEMMINGS – THE END

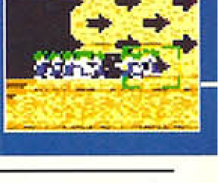
Here's Neil's solution to level 30, Sunsoft (what a guy). The USA version level-select code is HCNFD, and the passcode for the official version code is DJHPI.

1. Turn the third Lemming to fall (L03) into a basher
2. Turn L01 into a builder at the end of the top platform
3. Quickly, turn L04 into a builder at the left edge of the platform (thus safely trapping the main pack of Lemmings)
4. Try making L02 dig on the arrows – he'll fail, walk left and fall
5. Now, at the bottom of the hole, turn him into a basher
6. Make L01 build all the way across the gap to the right (two bridges)
7. After bashing left, turn L02 into a digger at the point shown
8. L01 will fall off the platform walk right, then left, then fall off the platform on the right – so make him a floater
9. He'll land and walk left, bash through the right arrow-block
10. Get ready to make L02 a builder. The bridge *has* to be positioned so that if a Lemming were to walk into it from the stairs, it would hit its head and turn around. Trial and error, really.
11. Then a basher...
12. Finally, bash your way through the left arrow-block to victory

Well done, you've done the very last level of *Lemmings*. Now turn to page 63 to find the codes for any other levels you may have missed.







Bart vs The Space Mutants

Fancy getting your hands on Moe, without the risk of taking a hit? Thought you might. All you have to do is stand on the stool, put your coin in the phone box as normal and then do the following. Press Left and C together, and Bart will skid off. Touch only button C, but keep Left pressed until you pass the door. Stop, press Right to turn towards the door, and wait for Moe to come out, then spray him. Simple.

There are lots of hidden levels in this game, so if you think you have discovered anything that other people may not have seen, do let use know.
David Dodds, Perthshire

The aliens have succeeded and you're dead. In other words it's game over dude

MEGA MEDIC

IT'S THAT TRICKY TRUCKY TERMINATOR

TERMINATOR ONE
TERMINATOR TWO
GUNPOWER

This is a real pain of a level, but check out Rip 'n' Tip on page 73 if you want to know how to do it

Q Can you please help me to get through level three of *Terminator 2?*
Daniel Goodfellow, Tunbridge Wells; Jason Langley, Southampton; Darrell Seffens, London; Gary Nicholls, Surrey; Nick Topping, Wigan; and M McMorrow, Nottingham

A It seems that quite a few readers are having problems getting through the third level of *Terminator 2.* It's quite a long level in which you have to protect John Connor as he drives his truck across the screen. So especially for the people who have written in we've decided to do a cut-out-and-keep for this difficult game. Turn to page 73.

JOE MONTANA 3

Another password breaker, but this time it's for the third *Joe Montana* game. Enter the three-letter code by the side of the team you wish to play then add: YNTSKBC

DLB – Bears
FLB – Bengals
KLB – Lions
LLB – Packers
RLB – Rams
TLB – Vikings
VLB – Saints
ZLB – Eagles
0LB – Cardinals
3LB – Seahawks
4LB – 49ers
6LB – Redskins
CDB – Bills
GDB – Browns
JDB – Broncos
MDB – Colts
NDB – Chiefs
PDB – Oilers
QDB – Raiders
SDB – Dolphins
WDB – Patriots
YDB – Jets
1DB – Steelers
2DB – Chargers
5HB – Buccaneers
XTB – Giants
HCB – Cowboys

Lotus Turbo Challenge

LOTUS
TURBO
CHALLENGE

Wouldn't you just love to own a Lotus? Did you know that someone at Sega has one and their number plate is J5 5EGA?

This is one nice little cheat for *Lotus Turbo Challenge.* Enter MANSELL on the password screen and you will qualify every time no matter what. Finishing the game is now a doddle.
Simon Pilbrow, Leigh-On-Sea, Essex

Oh, and we've just found out that there's another cheaty type password. Enter SLUGPACE and play the game. You may notice that you seem to be moving faster than normal. That's because you now have infinite turbos. Now you can zip through those tougher, later levels and see the boring end sequence (yes, it really is boring).

World of Illusion

No Mickey, go back and get the top hat for that extra life

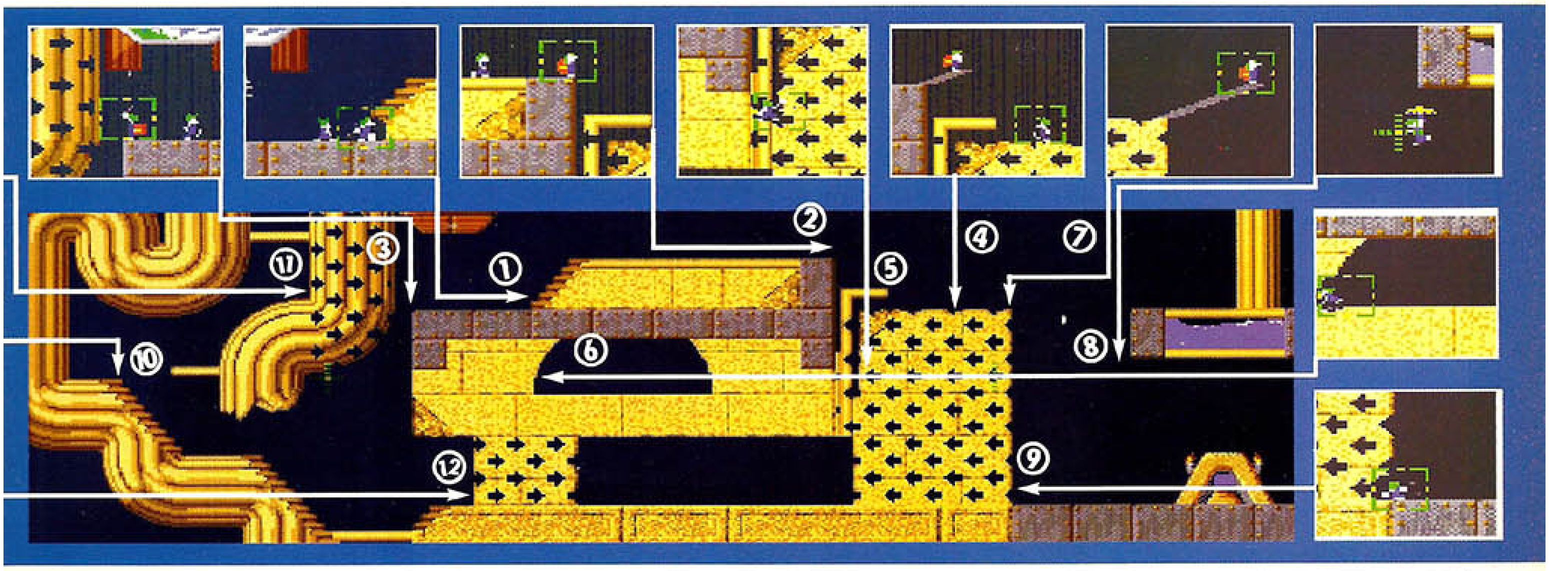
Not content with giving you all the passwords for this game (see page 62), we're now giving you a tip to maximise your lives. On the last level (Magic Box) you'll come across a top hat (you'll see this when you charm the cards, using your magic, for the third time). This gives you an extra life. Get to the end of the level and jump on the die with the FOUR on it. This will take you back to the top hat and you'll be able to collect again. Repeat this as many times as you like, then jump on the die with a THREE on it to finish the level.

MEGA MEDIC

USING YOUR SUB

Q Help! After many hours spent playing *Phantasy Star 3* I am stuck. I have found the Sub Parts, but I cannot find out how to use them. I assume that I need to go to the whirlpool south east of Hazatak. But where is it?
Alan Backshall, 204 Signal Squadron

A Well, you've got me stumped. I know you collect the Sub Parts, but you cannot use them because they are for Wren not Sean (who you are). Travel back to Hazatak and walk around the edge of the river near Hazatak to find a secret world. Wren will turn into a sub and you can travel on. There, hope that helps.



MEGA MEDIC

PERFECTION ITSELF?

Q I am stuck trying to find the Cave of Fire on the game *Rings of Power*. I need to find the cave so that I can get the flame wood and give it to the man in the restaurant in Perfection. I have looked in the Perfection library and I've got the note which tells me the co-ordinates of the cave, but I've looked there and I can't find it. Please help me, because this game is driving me round the bend.
James Hamilton, South Warnborough

A You don't say what the co-ordinates are that you see, so I don't know if you already have these, but you should find the Cave of Fire at 5'4, 10'8. Now get the wood and give it to the guy in the restaurant in Perfection . Simple really.

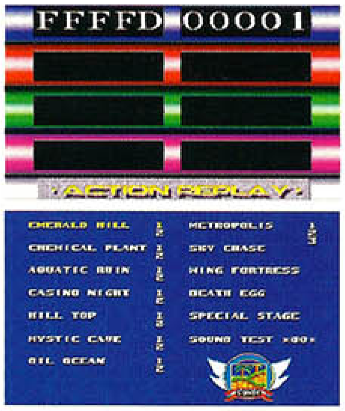
SONIC 2

Sonic 2 does actually have a level-select cheat. You need an Action Replay device to make this particular code work, and the code is FFFFD 00001.

Enter the above, and on the title screen press A and Start together. You'll see a list of the zones and the secret stages. Pick your level and play the game.
Andy Hughes, Chippenham

Since Andy sent in the above cheat, we have discovered a level-select code for *Sonic 2* which can be used without the aid of a cheating device.

So, if you haven't got an Action Replay cart and you haven't already discovered the code for yourself, turn immediately to page nine of this very issue of MEGA.



Here it is – the *Sonic 2* level select. Ahhh, now my life is complete

MEGA MEDIC

SUPER BLADE-Y TIPS THESE YOU KNOW

Q Could you please give me some tips, or preferably cheats, for the game *Super Thunderblade?* I keep dying on stage four and I'm really desperate to get further into the game.
Chris Penson, Norwich

A Well it's your lucky day, isn't it? For a start here's a level select. On the title screen press A, Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Down and Up. Then press Start and Up together. If you fancy working your way through the game with 30 lives, however, try this cheat. Press A, B, C and Start together on the title screen and the extra lives will be yours. There, that should help you out more than just a little.

Rolling Thunder 2

First we printed the codes for the Normal level of *Rolling Thunder 2*. Then we were given the codes for the Hard level. Well now we've got the codes for the second mission. Yes, apparently after you finish the game there is a second mission. So here are the codes.

MISSION TWO
Round 1 – A ROLLING PROGRAM SMASHED THE GENIUS
Round 2 – A CURIOUS RAINBOW LEARNED THE FUTURE
Round 3 – A MAGICAL ISOTOPE BLASTED THE DEVICE
Round 4 – A PRIVATE LEOPARD PUNCHED THE NEURON
Round 5 – A SLENDER FIGHTER ELECTED THE GENIUS
Round 6 – A DIGITAL RAINBOW MUFFLED THE SECRET
Round 7 – A LOGICAL THUNDER SMASHED THE POWDER
Round 8 – A ROLLING MACHINE DESIRED THE FUTURE
Round 9 – A SLENDER NUCLEUS BLASTED THE TARGET
Round 10 – A CURIOUS ISOTOPE CREATED THE KILLER
Round 11 – A NATURAL PROGRAM DESIRED THE NEURON
James Smith and Russell Chedgy, Midsomer Norton, Bath

MEGA MEDIC

YO! LIKE RAD STAKING DUDE!

Q Can you give me some advice on scoring points in the half-pipe event in *California Games?* It's really frustrating and some highly radical scores would be very nice.
James Bevers, Essex

A Forget about trying to perform too many stunts, because although variety maybe the spice of life, it doesn't mean success in *California Games*. Stick with the aerial turns at maximum height, because you can get up to 900 points per turn. Build up your speed by pressing Up and Down at the right time on the pipe and keep going.

Alien 3

The amount of mail we received after printing the maps for levels 11 to 15 of this game was astounding. It seems that a lot of you are still having trouble actually getting that far. Thankfully though, we've found a level-skip cheat, that should prove the end to your problems. You'll need two joypads to get this to work.

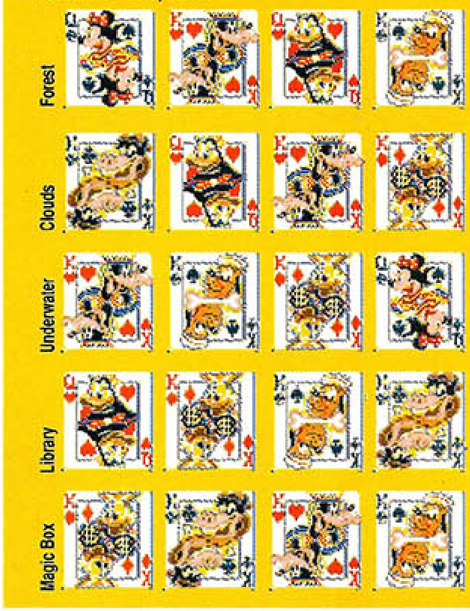
Using pad one, enter the options screen. Now on joypad two press C, Up, Right, Down, Left, A, Right and Down. You should now hear a sound as if you had collected a power up. This tells you the cheat has worked. Now start the game as normal and pause the game. On pad one press Start to pause and then C, A and B. The screen should go green to let you know the cheat has worked. Unpause and you'll skip the level.

Don't worry about the green border around the screen – it just means the cheat has worked

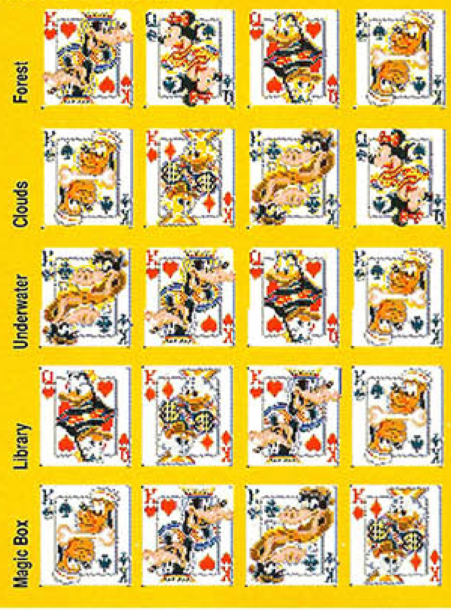
World of Illusion: Starring Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck

These passcodes have been sent in by *Phillip Denham* of Tiptree, Essex.

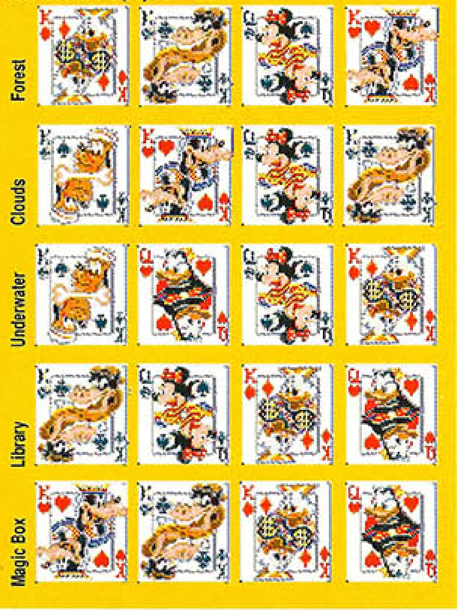
Passwords for Mickey Mouse:



Passwords for Donald Duck:



Passwords for two players:



Lemmings codes

English version

We have had a few inquiries regarding the *Lemmings* codes which we printed in issue four of MEGA. The codes were in fact for the Genesis version of the game, which came out before the official one, and they don't work on the English version. However, after much hard work, we now bring you the English codes. And if you want to see the solution to the very last level on Sunsoft, see the walkthrough on pages 60 and 61.

Fun	Tricky	Taxing	Mayhem	Present	Sunsoft
1. ROPMW	LPPZX	PPWM	1. RQPZM	BEONR	VEOQR
2. NSHNU	NWHQN	PUHZU	2. XXHQN	NIQQZ	JOQHS
3. TOPWM	ZPPLN	PQPIN	3. RTPLN	PHOZR	POOMT
4. PSHNU	TWHQN	TWHZU	4. BHHBP	VRRAB	VXQRT
5. HNPPQ	ROPER	PRFBR	5. DZFOS	ZOOCX	JQORX
6. DRHGY	PXHJR	BCIDA	6. FIHUS	LTRFF	BIQOV
7. JNFPQ	BRPER	LYFLS	7. DCFBT	DSOOX	ZDOJV
8. FRHGY	VXHJR	PEIDA	8. FLHGT	TERXC	JLQAW
9. ZOFWM	VSPLN	NCFTO	9. JGPIP	ZEONR	VIOCS
10. VSHNU	BGIIP	VGHWW	10. TVHEN	LJQQZ	NYQRT
11. BPFWM	NZFVO	FDFFP	11. NRFZ	DIOZR	PSOYT
12. XSHNU	HGHBP	JJHWW	12. TYHQN	TSRAB	VBQEU
13. PNFPQ	PYFOS	PEPYS	13. VQFER	XPOCX	ROOKV
14. LRHGY	DHHUS	RQHGY	14. XZHJR	JURFF	IYQBW
15. RNFPQ	PAPPS	DNFPQ	15. ZZFOS	BTOOX	DUOWV
16. NRHGY	JHHUS	FTHGY	16. BJHUS	VRRYC	RHQMX
17. JIFXM	LVPWO	PKPXM	17. HXPWO	DLOPR	FYOOT
18. PMNOU	NCHOP	NORAV	18. NEHOP	PPQSZ	THQGU
19. LIFXM	ZVPIP	XKFJN	19. HAPJP	HOOBS	ZJQSR
20. HMHOU	TCHOP	BRHAV	20. VBHHN	XYRCB	FTQXR
21. ZGFQQ	RUFBT	XLFCR	21. XTFUQ	BWOEX	TLOXV
22. VKHHY	PDHHT	JWIDA	22. ZCHAR	NARIF	LBQNX
23. BHFQQ	BXFBT	TSFMS	23. XWFGR	PZOQX	JXOHX
24. XKHHY	VDHHT	XYIDA	24. ZFHMR	VLRZC	TEQZX
25. RIFXM	VYFIP	VWFTO	25. DBFON	BHOPR	FCOBU
26. NMHOU	BOHFN	DBHXW	26. NOHDP	NQQSZ	PXHNC
27. TIFXM	NHPAN	NXFFP	27. HKPYO	FPOBS	RRKUC
28. PMHOU	HOHPN	RDHXW	28. NRHPP	VZHCB	XAMAD
29. HHPQQ	FGPTQ	NYPYS	29. PJFDT	ZWCEX	PZKXH
30. DLHHY	DPHYQ	DXHIY	30. RSHIT	LBRIF	DJHPI

THUNDERFORCE IV

Select zero stock ship on the options menu, move to exit and hold down A, B and C. Press Start until you're into the game and you'll have 99 lives, if you lose them and then continue, you'll still have all 99.

Craig Metcalf & Matthew Hawken, Carlisle

MEGA MEDIC

IS SILICON SONIC TAKING THE METAL MICKEY?

Ⓠ I've been having problems with *Sonic 2*. Yes, I know it sounds stupid, but it's true. On Death Egg Zone I can't seem to beat the metallic copy of Sonic himself. What do I do? Please help me, because I really would like to finish the game.

Paul Donavan, Plymouth

Ⓐ It can be a bit frustrating to start with, but once you know what you're doing and how to kill him you'll be OK. The only way to hit this other Sonic is to spin-jump and land on his forehead while he's standing still. As he goes from the left to the right, take note of his pattern and so learn when it is safe to attack. It shouldn't take too much time to kill him off and then you just have to deal with the final Robotnik.

WORLD TROPHY SOCCER

Here's a weird tip for *World Trophy Soccer* (the USA version of *Euro Club Soccer*). Select Tournament from the title screen and go to Password. Enter PVUUABIAE as your password. You'll now be in the final as player one versus player one. Both teams will have the same players and be dressed in the same strip. Strange or what?

Wei Ping, Halesworth, Suffolk

Deadly Moves

We've only just managed to get this game in for review (under the Jap name of *Power Athlete*), but someone out there has sent in the codes already.

Warren – XXI E4T2 0ZY
Vagnad – WBY MFDI HOZ
Li Yong – WBY E42Q UZI
Baraki – HB1 Y9JK D4W
Bu-oh – HB8 MFO6 NNN
Gaoluon – HY6 Z9J3 W47
Nick – QY1 G9J9 J97

Charles Room, Winchester, Hants

Gaiares

This is a sort of double cheat – a stage select and a weapon select all in one. Go to the options screen by pressing A, B, C and Start together. Select BGM 18, hold down A on the second pad and exit the options. Press Start on the first pad and you get a stage select.

Start the game and pause. Hold Up on the pad and press the A button any number of times between one and 14 to choose a weapon. Unpause and play the game.

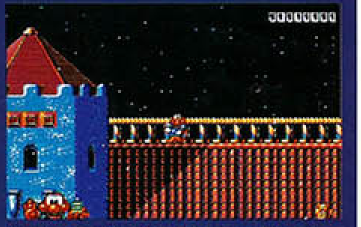
Chris Daniels, Warrington

YES, IT'S CLASSIC TIP TIME

Yes, it's that time again where we embarrass some poor reader who thought he was the first person to send in this tip. He doesn't win a prize or anything, he just gets humiliated. This month's winner is *Mike Weaver* from Stonehouse in Gloucestershire for sending in the (very) old secret room cheat for *James Pond 2: Robocod.*

So here's the classic tip. At the start of the game, jump over the first two doors and then run up the staircase. Instead of going left, go right as far as you can. Jump up onto the ramparts of the right tower until you come to the roof. Jump onto the roof, run left as if you were going to collide with the wall and Hey Presto! you'll find yourself with an extra live.

Well, if you didn't know that, you may like to check out another classic tip next month.



Right, so you're on the roof. Where do you go from here? Read the tip!

Dragon's Fury

In addition to a tip we ran a couple of months ago this one lets you get the 2,000,000 special score.

Launch the ball and hold down both flippers. The ball should pop into the head straight away.

Simon Ballie, Helmshore, Rossendale

Carts for tips...

The sender of the best tip each month wins a cart of his/her choice. This month's winners are The Hackers who say "Ni!" for their Action Replay codes. Please contact Paul Mellerick to let him know which cart you'd like. Send your Mega Drive tips to MEGA PLAY, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Well, you obviously know how to use one of those Action Replay thingies, don't you? This month we've received some really good codes and the ones we've chosen to print come from The Hackers who say 'Ni!', Camberley in Surrey and Adrian Rye from Kings Lynn, Norfolk.

Alien Storm:
FFCE0 B0060 – Infinite lives for player one
FFCE8 B0060 – Infinite lives for player two
Ghostbusters:
FFFE2 B0002 – Infinite lives
FFFE2 C0014 – Infinite energy
FFFE1 D0003 – Infinite bombs
NHLPA Hockey:
FFC4F 300XX – Use XX (choose a number between 00 and 99) to start the game with that many goals already scored
FFC69 500XX – Same for player two
Quackshot:
FF8F9 90003 – Infinite lives
FF8F9 70005 – Infinite energy
FF8F9 10005 – Infinite popcorn
Sonic The Hedgehog 2:
FFFE1 20009 – Infinite lives
FFFFB 10007 – Start with seven chaos emeralds
Super Monaco GP 2:
FFFF5 B0000 – Starts you in first place, no matter where you finished in the qualifying race.
Greendog:
FF20F C0001 – Infinite energy
FF17D D0004 – Infinite lives

GAME GENIE CODES

Alien 3:
D2CT CADY – Clock runs faster
B6BT AAEY – Start on stage 12
AMDA CA4J – Long falls do not reduce energy
Alien Storm:
EABT AA4W – Master Code
AB8A AACW – Special attacks use no energy
AB9T CAN0 – Energy unit is worth eight
Cyberball:
XGLT BXGY – Start game with $999,990
ALVT AACA – Workshop is free
BXDT AA9N – Freeze play timer
Taz-Mania:
AJKT JA24 – Infinite lives
PYKT KYW2 – Play every fifth level
AK4A EA6J – Food worth no health
Sonic 2:
SAST DA1A – Each ring is worth eight
NN8A AAD2 – Start with 99 lives
KBVT CAE2 – Smaller jump
CBVT CAE2 – Rocket jump!
JW3A CA4J – Infinite lives
ATTT CA4W – Sonic doesn't lose rings when hit
ALTA CA8N – Invisible after getting hit

Keep sending in your Action Replay and Game Genie codes and they could be printed in a future issue of MEGA. And if you've got a really wacky code, send it to ARENA (see page 68) at the usual address and you could win a cart.

TIPS LIST

This month's Tips List is even more chocka with cheats, passwords and helpful hints than last month's. It still covers only four pages, but there are tips for over 150 Mega Drive games. Each month, we will add to the list until we have to start ditching some of the old tips in order to make room for the new. So, keep sending in your cheats, and not only will they be printed in MEGA PLAY (if they're good enough), but they will then be transferred to this listing, where they will stay until we decide they're passé and so subtly let them drop off the bottom of the page

AFTER BURNER 2

- On the intro screen hold down A, B, C and Start. When the carrier appears, select your start level with Left and Right.
- When pressing the speed-up button, wait until you reach maximum speed then double tap the speed-up button quickly for an extra burst.
- For 100 missiles press Left and B on stage 3, Right and B on stage 5, B on stage 9 and Right and B on stage 11.
- For 100 missiles press Left and B on stage 13, Right and B on stage 16, B on stage 19 and Right and B on stage 21.

AIR DIVER

- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press Start for invincibility.
- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press A to meet the fighter ace.
- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press B to go to the super carrier.
- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press C to face the last alien ship.

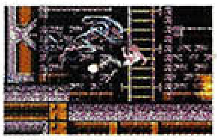
ALESTE

- For a level select press Reset on the title screen and then hold Left until the title screen comes back up.
- Pause the game and press Up, Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, C, C, B, A and then Start for 20 extra continues.

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE

- Paperockians' solution: 1) Rock, rock; 2) Scissors, scissors; 3) Rock, scissors; 4) Paper, paper; 5) Rock, rock; 6) Rock, scissors.
- On the final screen, Lake Deep, walk in the following order: Sun, wiggly lines, moon, star, sun, moon, wriggly lines, fish, star, fish, crown.

ALIEN 3



- From the start of level two fire at the oncoming alien then jump up-left through a gap in the wall for a secret room.

ALISIA DRAGOON

- Strategically use your smart bomb weapon to discover bonuses hidden off screen.

ALTERED BEAST

- Press Start and B on the intro screen to access an extra options menu, including power, lives etc.
- Press A, B, C, Start, Down and Left simultaneously. You can now change into any animal on any level.
- Hold down A and Start for infinite continues when you've finished a game.

ARCUS ODYSSEY

- The code to enter the final level is KYMEMUU05F.

ARNOLD PALMER TOURNAMENT GOLF

- Take over 100 shots on a hole. Now press A, B, C and Up to enter a version of Fantasy Zone!
- This is the code to enter the last round with loads of money: 0MHE2VlC4gVUra0Ujd qKUD6vygcUAAur-bgv
- Enter a secret tournament by using the following code: ffffffffffffffff 9999999999999999

ARROW FLASH

- Set the arrow flash to charge and watch the demo. Start the game, and if the arrow flash which should have been charged is stocked, you're OK.

ASSAULT SUIT LEYNOS

- Get all the weapons by shooting just the end-of-level guardian on level one to give you 2,800 points and massive destructive power.
- For invincibility press Start on controller number two at the intro.
- For nine extra continues go to the options screen when you have only two continues left and press Start.

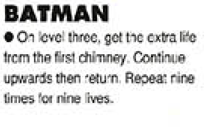
AXIS FZ

- On the control configurations allocate A for option, B for select and C for hand. Exit and hit Reset. Demo to level five and join in!

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3

- Pause game then press Up and A, Down and A, Left and A, then Right and A to warp to the next level.

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS



- Wait outside the cinema on level one. When your timer counts down to 400 a boy dressed in purple will walk out. How about that?
- At the end of the level, stand under the last window of the retirement home and use the whistle to get more money.

BATMAN

- On level three, get the extra life from the first chimney. Continue upwards then return. Repeat nine times for nine lives.

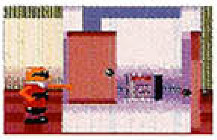
BATTLE GOLFER

- Press B and Start on the title screen for a secret music test.

BATTLE SQUADRON

- Stick to the red weapon, seriously.

BONANZA BROS



- Step on a rake at the same time you're hit by a bullet to become temporarily invincible.

BUCK ROGERS

- Steal the Plasma Cannon from the pirates.

BUDOKAN

- The jumping strike is the most powerful move in Kendo.
- Kicks are the most crippling blows in Karate.
- The triple strike is the way to go in Nunchaku.
- Use the overhead and spinning jump strikes in the art of Bo.

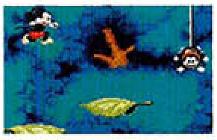
BURNING FORCE

- On the options screen press B, A, B, A, A, C, A, A then start the game. You'll have ten lives.

CALIFORNIA GAMES

- Half-Pipe Skateboarding – go for the straight up and down movement of the aerial turns. Press Down on the way down and Up on the way up to get more speed.
- Foot Bag – perform two jesters and the bag will flash red. Now all stunts are worth double.
- Surfing – turn to ride up a wave then turn in mid air to come back down at the same angle.
- Roller Skating – spinning while jumping will increase your points many times over.
- BMXing – the move that gives you the most points is the backward flip. Get to the end of the level with more than 40,000 points and get a new bike.

CASTLE OF ILLUSION



- When you've finished a level, press Start while your score's being added, for extra lives.
- Kill the tree-trunk boss by waiting to the left of the screen and firing apples at him when he turns into a tree trunk.
- By holding down A, B and C and pressing Start you can turn Mickey into a ghost. You can walk through walls and enemies.

CENTURION

- Use the code: BN4Q AUIIV W6IQ ZCA5 555S 73U to get well ahead.

CHUCK ROCK

- While the band plays, press ABRACADABRA and the guitarist will smile. Press A, B and C together, start the game and press Up while holding A to advance a level.

COLUMNS

- Build a column of blocks on one side of the screen. Position a magic block so that only two of the tree blocks fit on the screen.The third block will fall separately.

CORPORATION

- At the start, buy one gun(2), two grenades, one bomb, one power pack, four refills, three electronics, one armour(3).
- The most important weapon is the bomb, but don't use it until you get put into prison as it is your only means of escape.
- If thrown in prison, simply check your pockets...
- Don't buy a lock-pick, find one.
- The crab monster is only a hologram, but sometimes it's hiding something infinitely more dangerous.

CURSE

- Press Reset, hold down A and press Start to choose the level on which you wish to start.
- For a level-select cheat, reset the game and press A and Start together.

CYBERBALL

- Enter P5BB B5PS IHEX to play in the finals as the Minnesota Maulers.
- Use the code L5BB LDCI BFAV to play the LA Assassins in the final with $6,948,000 in the bank.
- Use the code: CGBB B8FB BB2V to see the end.

DANGEROUS SEED

- Press Up, Down, Left, Left, Right, Right, Up, Down to enter "expert mode". A chime will tell you when you've got it.

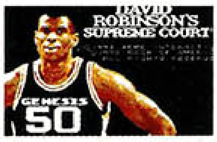
DARIUS 2

- On the intro screen press A, B, A, C, B, C, C, B, C, A, B, A. A "No Hit" message should appear and then you're invincible.
- On the intro screen press C, A, C, B, C, A, B, A, B, C, A, C for a level select.

DARWIN 4081

- Play track 32 on the sound test. Hit A for each level you want to skip.

DAVID ROBINSON'S BASKETBALL



- Some passwords:

CABCDEA1F – Los Angeles vs Detroit

Password: ASTURBQIE – Chicago vs New York

Password: FMJCLJY1B – New York vs Detroit

Password: WYBCDEAYU – Detroit vs Los Angeles

DECAP ATTACK

- Land vertically on top of a bouncy pole. If the red segments turn white, your life is replenished.
- Level 1-3: when you start, fall down from the platform on which you are standing and walk right. Smash the statue for your prize.
- Level 2-3: Fall down, jump up, fall down again, walk as far left as you can go, jump up to the platform above you and smash the statue.
- Level 3-3: Jump on the clouds and head right towards the two columns with arrows pointing inward. Jump between them and walk right on the water to the statue
- Level 4-3: Travel through the first puddle of water to the next one. Go left and fall down the hole. Keep heading left over the lava pit and

bash that statue.

● Level 5-3: Hop over the first two lava pits and when you reach the third one, stop in and grab your prize.

● Level 6-3: The statue is hidden under the ice but above the molten lava in the middle of the stage.

● Level 7-3: The statue is in the water surrounded by those horrible little fish-like creatures.

DESERT STRIKE

● To rescue your co-pilot from the bomber, blow a hole in the middle of the bomber then wait until he walks along the wing. Move close to pick him up.

● Here are some codes:
Level 2: BCJRAEF
Level 3: TLJKOAP
Level 4: WTEOVJP

● Jake is hidden in the top right-hand corner on the second campaign, you're told you've rescued him in campaign three.

● For five lives instead of three enter code: TQQQLOM

● For ten lives instead of three enter code: BQQQAEZ

● When the Apache AH-64 attack helicopter and the words "DESERT STRIKE" appear on screen, fire Hellfires by pressing button A.

DEVIL CRASH

● Here's a code for all you pinball wizards: ALCLAE8ECK.

● To get to the last level, enter code: 5VENAXUEMN

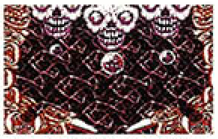
DEVILISH

● Hold down A, B, C and Left on the title screen and press Start for 99 balls.

DJ BOY

● Hit the third falling barrel on level three to reveal loads of secret goodies.

DRAGON'S FURY



● Enter UUBV99BCRE for 73 balls and 505,705,300 points.

● Enter ALCLAE8ECK for 21 balls and the end-of-game sequence.

DYNAMITE DUKE

● Press Start for the normal options screen to appear, but press C ten times and Start for a totally different options screen.

EA HOCKEY

● For a 4-2 lead in the finals as the USSR against the USA, enter the following code: HKT82Y93JDB7G435

● Don't forget that you can substitute goal keepers if one isn't behaving properly.

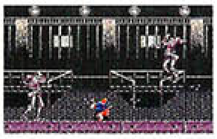
EARNEST EVANS

● If you're having trouble with a particular level, then skip it. Pause the game and press Up, A, Down, Left, A, Right, B and then unpause the game.

ELEMENTAL MASTER

● Press A and Start simultaneously and you'll enter the hidden options screen.

ESWAT



● Finish the game and then, if you want a level select, press Right and Down and A, B and C while simultaneously pressing Start on the title screen.

EURO CLUB SOCCER

● Choose who you play as in the finals as by using the following codes:
Norwich City – 373UAA4IGC (vs Rangers)
Liverpool – SAHEAA6ICA (vs Celtic)
Aston Villa – BEDUAA7ICA (vs Real Sociedad)
Tottenham Hotspur – J6CUAA8IHA (vs Celtic)
Arsenal – ZWNEAA9IAE (vs Bordeaux)
Nottingham Forest – KOAEABAIAE (vs PSV Eindhoven)
Leeds United – J9NUABBIAE (vs Gothenburg)
Everton – 7BKEABCIAE (vs Seville)
Manchester United – 3YREABDIAE (vs Hearts)
Chelsea – D7FUABEIAE (vs Hearts)
West Ham United – GE8UABFIARE (vs AC Milan)
Rotherham United – PVUUABGIAE (vs Hamburg)

FAERY TALE

● To see the end of the game enter this code:
7R2KUL6RSZXSK6NHGSDCB7206 63RI2HO785P.

FANTASIA

● On level 1-2, grab the extra life then continue right to a treasure chest. Get in and be warped back to the start of the level. Repeat.

FASTEST ONE

● If you're having trouble staying on the track in this game, then enter your name as HAPPY NEW YEAR in the world championship mode and you'll get better tyres.

FATMAN

● Start the game controlling Sheba by pressing B and C, then hit B twice on the title screen.

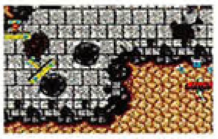
FINAL BLOW

● When you get knocked out, press Up and Start when "Game Over" appears. You'll continue with a free credit.

FIRE FIGHT

● To get to the hidden options screen, press the D-pad Left and press Start at the intro screen.

FIRE SHARK



● Finish the game and you'll restart with full power ups.

● Fully power-up your weapons, grab three power-ups, destroy either a General Porter or Yonemaru for two extra lives.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

● For infinite continues play in two-player mode and press Start three times or so when a player dies.

F1 CIRCUS

● To skip training mode, select step one of training, and as the starter counts down to 0, move into reverse and drive backwards around the course for a good lap time. If you continue to clear all the round like this, six teams will try to sign you up.

F-1 GRAND PRIX

● Start the British Grand Prix in a McClaron's car by using the following code:
NABCTPHSNGKTIXBDDE
GMHJJOKLMTFJ HOILKL
LONVORQX LQMW

F-22 INTERCEPTOR

● Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Russian Challenge: KSQGIV

● Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Aces Challenge: MH01K1

● Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Korean challenge: BI0F8P

● Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Iraqui challenge: GTGE8V

● Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: American challenge: 6PGE02

GALAHAD

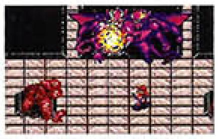
● To get to level two enter ZXSP.

GAIRIES

● At the start of each level, pause the game and hold down buttons A and C then press Left. Unpause, and you'll be invincible.

● Go to the config screen by holding down A, B and C, then press Start. Set the sound test to 18, hold down A on the second controller and exit the config. Press Start on the first controller to go to the stage-select screen.

GAIN GROUND



● For a level-select option go to the option screen and press A, C, B, and then C. "Round select" will appear below "sound test".

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

● On the title screen press button A four times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press B and Start for invincibility.

● On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Up, A and Start to start halfway through level two.

● On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Down, A, and Start to start on level three.

● On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Down-Right, A, and Start to start on the final boss level.

● On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Right, A, and Start to start on level five.

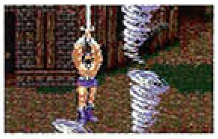
● On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Left, A, and Start to start halfway through level four.

● Select number 26 on the music test, then number 56 on the sound test, hold Down/Left with A, B and C, then press Start to play in Japanese.

GOLDEN AXE

● Select a one-player arcade game and hold Down-Left with A and C. Let go for nine continues. Then hold B, Start and Left for a level select.

GOLDEN AXE 2



● Fight the first boss holding down A. Release A at the campfires, but don't attack anything. Continue with 200 magic units.

● Press A, B, C and Start on the titles, select options, keep holding A, hit B and C again, move to exit, keep holding A and hit B and C until you get to character select, hold A and Up and hit B and C one last time. Now pick your level.

GRANADA

● On the options screen, press C ten times on the rank section. You can now choose the easy rank.

GYNOUG

● Hold Left, A and C then press Start on the game-over screen for more continues.

● On the options screen, select the control icon and hold down A, B and C for ten seconds for a stage select.

HARD DRIVIN'

● Hit the cow!

HEAVY UNIT

● Hit A, B, C and Start on the title screen for a new skill level.

HELLFIRE

● Choose a hard difficulty setting and listen to any track on the sound test for over a minute. The game will start itself with 99 continues.

● Play through level one to the columns with prizes in their tips. Blow up the last one and occasionally you'll see a robot woman dancing.

HERZOG ZWEI

● Here are some passwords:
GGGKHAGOKLO
BPHOHACAGML
NPLOFOCAGKP
IMLPFEGEMLC
LILOPBDPIKJ
JLJOMGJAOKL
JLJOIGJBOKO
LHJKINAFAMA

IMMORTAL (THE)

● Here are some passwords:
Level five: D4BFD41000EB
Level six: BCFEF51010A4
Level seven: 6B10F61010AC

● On level four, put a ring on each hole and then walk round in a clockwise direction until the exit appears.

● In the room with the three pentagrams, place one gem on the right hole of the first pentagram, one on the left hole of the next, and one in the centre of the last one.

INSECTOR X

● On the continue screen hold Up and Left and repeatedly press C very quickly for more credits.

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS BOXING

● Win four matches to win the heavyweight belt, then defend your title four times to meet a secret opponent called Iron Head.

● If you've run out of continues on James "Buster" Douglas Boxing, then press Up and Start on the game-over screen for one more try.

JAMES POND

● On mission one there are hidden entrances to level 11 (on the far left, out of the water) and on level 6 (on the far left of the sea bed, just before the cliff).

● Collect all the letters in the baddy rooms to spell out James Pond and earn a massive 10,000,000 point bonus.

JAMES POND 2 ROBOCOD

● Collect the objects on the roof at the start in this order: cake, hammer, earth, apple, tap for ten minutes of invincibility.

● On the sports level, collect the items on the tennis ball in this order: lips, ice-cream, violin, earth, snowman for infinite lives.

● On the title screen hold Down/Left and A and C and then press Start for a level select.

JOE MONTANA 2

● Choose the team you'd like to play as in the Sega Bowl final by using the following codes.
San Francisco – ZABT5EBPII (vs BUFF)
Los Angeles (A) – MABT54IHIA (vs NY)
Philadelphia – UX3T54IHIA (vs KC)
Los Angeles (N) – NAATAXXXKA (vs Miami)
Detroit – HPOTPVPGIE (vs S Diego)
San Francisco – ZABT5EBPII (vs Buffalo)
Los Angeles (A) – MABT54IHIA (vs New York)
Philadelphia – UX3T54IHIA (vs KC)
Los Angeles (N) – NAATAXXXKA (Miami)
Detroit – HPOTPVPGIE (vs S Diego)

JOE MONTANA 3

● To get the San Francisco 49ers into the Sega Bowl enter 45TY??KBL.

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL

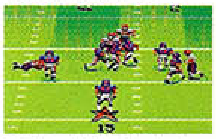
● Get to the quarter finals: 0465100

● Get to the semi-finals : 0075121, 0076310, 1111111 or 3333333

● Get to the Superbowl : 0475121, 0476314, 0633253, 0673125 or 0631573

● Fancy playing in the snow? Enter: 5504500

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92



● At the end of the final, when the display of the pitch is shown and the score comes up, press Up, C, Down, C, Left, C, Right, C, Up, B, Down, B, Left, B, Right, B, Up, C, Down, C, Left, C, Right, C. The screen should then move upwards to display the fireworks.

● Choose the team you'd like to play as in the finals by using the following codes:
Atlanta (vs San Diego) – CG1PYFTM
Buffalo (vs San Francisco) – BXMMC6M1
Chicago (vs Denver) – CG8JYLC1
Cincinnati (vs San Francisco) – BOXWLRM8
Cleveland (vs Philadelphia) – D5C5N11G
Dallas (vs Miami) – BDNT6NX7
Denver (vs Philadelphia) – C5ZWM6BZ
Detroit (vs Buffalo) – CZYZYZS8
Green Bay (vs Cincinnati) – DSBK3W5W
Houston (vs New York) – DSRTMLVY
Indianapolis (vs Phoenix) – BD1X612H
Kansas City (vs Atanta) – CLG7Y8FF
Los Angeles (vs Miami) – CNYGOYHL
Miami (vs San Francisco) – B6KKGYOL
Minnesota (vs Buffalo) – BTDWO9BN
New England (vs Washington) – B9M3YDIP
New Jersey (vs New York) – C235TOZD
New Orleans (vs Kansas City) – B27O9V41

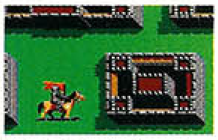
TIPS LIST

New York (vs Buffalo) – D42HGN2K
Oakland (vs Washington) – CDLLB7LM
Philadelphia (vs Houston) – CSWV7Z76
Phoenix (vs Buffalo) – CSSXHF4P
Pittsburgh (vs Chicago) – CZ97W14F
San Diego (vs San Francisco) – D8L3T4XY
San Francisco (vs Denver) – B3DFNO5K
Seattle (vs San Francisco) – BLTJXL6Z
Tampa Bay (vs Denver) – CK5HHPYP
Washington (vs Oakland) – CZSK2TMR

KID CHAMELEON

- At the end of Blue Lake Woods one don't touch the flag. Climb on the last block, and press Down-Right while holding jump and special to warp to the last boss.

KING'S BOUNTY



- When going into battle, always start with your long-range troops (archers, orks or elves).

KLAX

- Press Up and Left, buttons A, B, C and press Start on the title screen to increase the level of difficulty.
- On levels 6 or 11, try to make an X with the tiles to teleport you straight to level 49.

LAKERS VERSUS CELTICS

- Try this password: 3L2 GJS

LAST BATTLE

- Complete the game. Now press A, B, C and Start to choose your level.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

- Here are all the codes for NORMAL.

Level 1: DAAAIHA
Level 2: DAAAQEA
Level 3: DAAAYFA
Level 4: DAAAAWC
Level 5: DACAIWC
Level 6: DACAQVC
Level 7: DACAYUC
Level 8: DACABHE
Level 9: DACAJGE
Level 10: DACARFE
Level 11: DACAZEE
Level 12: DACABXG
Level 13: DACAJWG
Level 14: DACARVG
Level 15: DACAZUG
Level 16: DACAAPA
Level 17: DCKAIKE
Level 18: DCKAQJE
Level 19: DCKAYIE
Level 20: DCKAA6G
Level 21: DCKAI4G
Level 22: DCKAQZG
Level 23: DCKAYYG
Level 24: DCKABLA
Level 25: DCKAJKA
Level 26: DCKARJA
Level 27: DCKAZIA
Level 28: DCKAB6C
Level 29: DCKAJ4C
Level 30: DCKARZC

MARVEL LAND

- Enter the code TRIDENT for the last level.

MASTERS OF MONSTERS

- Press A, B and C then Start at the start to get to the end.
- Press A, B and C then Start at the start then hold Up-Left for English text.

MEGA PANEL

- Stop the girl talking by pressing button C anytime during play.

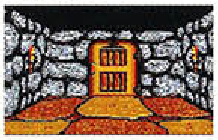
MERCS

- Get the gold first aid box when you've got maximum energy, pause the game, select another player, wait, select another player, and so on until all your team are at full strength.
- Enter the original mode and hold down A, B, and C. Now press Start to heat things up.
- On level eight (in original mode) annihilate all the guys exiting the door, then buy kit in the shop, with just one medal.

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

- On the title screen, hold C and press Start. Pause the action and hit A to skip to the next level.

MIGHT AND MAGIC



- To complete his Plus quest the knight must face and defeat (with only knights and robbers) the Dread Knight, who is in B3, location 5,14.
- The Sorcerer must travel to the Isle of Ancients in B3, 4,15. There is a dungeon at either end of the Island and each holds a wizard, who must be freed from stasis.
- The Paladin must defeat the Frost Dragon, who is in C3 in the Forest Cavern.
- The Archer must pit his wits against Baron Wilfrey in B2, 11,2. This is one of the tougher quests.
- Cleric finds Corak's Soul in C1, location 10,15. The body is in C2 in Corak's Cave. The Cleric must have the Admit 8 Pass from the cavern beneath Sansobar to enter.
- After completing the Juror's Quests (winning a black triple crown) go to Queen Lamanda in the Luxus Palace Royale. She will make one of your party her Chosen One.

MIKE DITKA POWER FOOTBALL

- Go straight to the finals of *Mike Ditka Power Football* by using the following code: QzH5EG.

MOONWALKER

- Pick up a certain kiddie first and a star will flash across the screen. Catch the star and you become a robot for a short while.

NEW ZEALAND STORY

- During the demo, rotate either joypad for nine credits.

NHLPA HOCKEY

- If you are having trouble finding some space from which to score, then a few extra players might help. Get a couple of players in the sin bin and then pause the game and enter the Edit Lines mode. Now change all your players and go back to the game. When the sin bin time is over, the player(s) will come back onto the ice. It's possible to have up to seven players on the ice at one time.
- Choose the All Stars West as your team and go to the Edit Lines menu. Now change your team to the following:
  RD – Housley, RW – Yzerman, C – Reonick, LW – Fedrov, LD – Chelios. Now you should always come out on top.

ONSLAUGHT

- Enter just zeros on the password screen to start well ahead.

OUTRUN

- Enter your name as ENDING to see the end sequence.
- Press Start to reach the option icon. Press the C button ten times, then press Start to access a Hyper difficulty level.

PGA TOUR GOLF

- Save your game after every decent shot, then simply restart your game if your next shot is crap.

PHANTASY STAR 2

- Continually turn the status screen on and off during the action to avoid being attacked.
- To get the Maueragum, the third tree from the right is the real tree.
- To get to Piata, park your jet scooter in the indentation on the right-hand side of the map (next to the mountains) and then just walk.
- To get to Climatrol, go to Uzo Island, go under it, to the left. Go south from the island that looks like Uzo and you'll find a spider's web in the water.
- To get to the Visaphone, take Shir (the thief) to the baggage room in Paseo. Go in and out until she finds the Visaphone.
- To get the Moon Dew and Star Mist, take Shir (the thief) to the tool shop in Paseo. Go in and out of the tool shop until she steals it.
- Megoid is gained at level 35 by Rolf. Nasar is gained at level 30, by the Doctor.
- Once you have all the Nei items, go to Lutz and he will give you the Neisword.

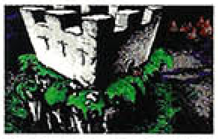
PHELIOS

- When the Chapter One message appears with credit three, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A for nine credits.

PIT-FIGHTER

- On level nine in one-player mode, pause, plug in the second joypad, and press Start and you'll get three extra lives.

POPULOUS



- Here are some level-select codes:

025 – QAZITORY
050 – HOBOZJOB
075 – NIMLOPILL
100 – CALEOLD
125 – FUTDIMAR
150 – BINQUEME
175 – ALPAPAL
200 – EOAMPMET
225 – HURTOGODOR
250 – VERYOXT
275 – BUGINOND
300 – BILQAZOUT
325 – SCODEING
350 – SUZDIEHOLE
375 – SADOUTER
400 – BADMEILL
425 – BURIKEPIL
450 – JOSYMAR
475 – MINCEME
494 – WEAVUSPERT

POWERBALL

- Fancy a sound test? Then go to the league-continue mode and choose China. Enter KWGEN as your password and hit start.
- To find extra teams, pause a game, press B, B, C, B, B, C, now press Down for four extra teams.

PREDATOR 2

- Here are some passwords for *Predator 2*.

Level 2 – KILLERS
Level 3 – CAMOUFLAGE
Level 4 – LOS ANGELES (including the space)
Level 5 – SUBTERROR
Level 6 – TOTAL BODY (including the space)

QUACKSHOT

- In Transylvania, collect the one-up, finish the level, call the plane, go back to the start of Transylvania and repeat to max out your lives.
- After the tiger when the roof falls down, jump on SUN, then MOON, then STAR.

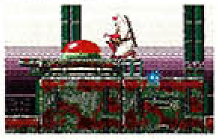
RAINBOW ISLANDS

- Press Up, B, Down, Left, C, A, A, B and C on the title screen for full power-ups.
- On level one, collect all the diamonds in sequence from red to purple and kill the boss to access an entrance to a bonus screen.

RBI4 BASEBALL

- On the password screen enter RBI BASEBALL 4 as the code. You'll now see a message appear at the bottom of the screen and you'll be given a special passcode.

REVENGE OF SHINOBI



- Select 00 shurikens at the start and wait for the two zeros to merge into an infinity symbol for infinite shurikens.

RINGSIDE ANGEL

- Choose Cuty Suzuki, hold A while pressing Start on the select screen to play against yourself.
- During a tournament, skip the computer bouts by holding Start and pressing any buttons.

RINGS OF POWER

- The ring of mutation can be found at 24, 1 longitude and 14,3 latitude.

ROLLING THUNDER 2

- The code for the final level is A PRIVATE THUNDER CREATED THE POWDER.

ROAD RASH

- Here are some level-select codes for this fab racing game.

Race to the final level – 21111 05VT0 102HF 47132
Level 2 – 10000 01CMO 01435 243DE
Level 3 – 00000 02TT1 10A2J 45TOT
Level 4 – 43143 067KO 01EVD 571RQ

SAINT SWORD

- Here are some level-select codes for *Saint Sword*.

IQW1EL – level 3-1
K2JOCK – level 4-1
KWWKQQ – level 4-2
QWQ10C2 – level 5-2
S2YY2Y – level 6-1
SOGZAL – level 6-2
XXKSIS – level 7-2

SHADOW DANCER

- Complete the whole of the first level using only magic to receive 100,000 bonus points.
- On the title screen, press A, B, C and Start at the same time to access a practice mode level select.
- On the first bonus level, don't shoot, simply dodge all the ninjas to earn an extra life.
- Enter your name as ZQX and press and hold A, B, C and Start until you get back into the game for infinite lives.
- Drop a coin down the well to receive an extra life

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

- Take a magic item that loses power when used to be repaired. Have less money than it costs, go to sleep, pick up the items the following day and you'll get loads of money.
- The vial of tears: get all the Arms of Light and visit Jessa in the castle. Theos will gather her tears when she cries. Take the Vial of tears from Theos.
- Keep returning to the tavern in the village to get up-to-date information like the whereabouts of important characters.
- Here are some passwords:

Level one: stairs from level one to level two – 10S, 12E
Cave Of Courage: stairs down to get to the Boss – 10S, 9E
Cave Of Truth, use the Fake Idol – 7S, 23E
Cave Of Wisdom: hole to fall down (which gets you to the end) – 10S, 18E
Level 3: Light Helm – 8S, 29E; Light Shield – 9S, 1E; Rope – 27S, 1E
Level 4: Light Blade – 5S, 11E; Cell Key – 13S, 9E
Level 5: Light Armour – 5S, 9E
Bosses: Kaiser Crab – 18S, 12E; Gila (cave of strength) – 21S, 7E; Toriolyde (cave of courage) – 17S, 4E; Doppler (cave of truth) – 7S, 21E
Bosses: Grim Wall (level one) – 20S, 16E; Black Bone (level three) – 27S, 19E; Dark Knight (level four) – 13S, 7E; Dark Sol (level five) – 11S, 15E

SHOVE IT

- Enter IAYASAMI on the password screen to get to the last level.

SLAUGHTER SPORT

- Choose the character you want to play as by doing the following key combinations.

Bonapart – press A then Up then C then Start on the title screen
Buff – press Left then C then B then Start on the title screen
El Toro –press B and C together, A then Up then Start on the title screen
Guano – press Up then Right and A and B together then Start on the title screen
MC Fire – press Down than C then Right then Start on the title screen
Mondu – press A and B together then Down the Left then Start on the title screen
Ramses – press Right then Left then A then Start on the title screen
Robo Chic – press Right then Up then Down then Start on the title screen
Sheba – press B and C together then B then B again then Start on the title screen
Skinny – press Right then Down then Right than Start on the title screen
Webra – press A and C together then Up then Right then Start on the title screen
Weezil – press Down then Right then Up then Start on the title screen

SMASH TV

- When you enter a room and you've wiped out almost everyone, leave one guy alone and avoid him. Now the room will start to fill up with goodies, like weapons, lives and keys. Make sure you don't kill him or pick up a smart bomb, 'cos you'll then have to exit the room.

SOL DEACE

- On the title screen press A, B, C,

A, B, C, B, C, B, A and Start. Enter the Config mode, select Start, choose your level, select Mode, press Right until the symbol MY99 appears for 99 ships.
- Skip levels by pressing buttons A, B and C together.
- To play in slow motion, pause the game and tap the fire button.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

- On the intro screen press Up, Down, Left, Right and then hit A and Start to access a level select.
- Press Up, C, Down, C, Left, C, Right, C, hold down A and press Start. Play Green Hill Zone, Act 1 and get at least 50 rings. Enter the chaos maze and press B to turn Sonic into a ring. Now find the hidden zone.
- Finish any act in under 30 seconds for a 50,000 points bonus.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

- When you collect a Chaos Emerald, reset the game. Now enter the options menu and press Start. The game will start again, but you should still have the emerald you collected. You can now collect all the emeralds on the Emerald Hill Zone and burn through the rest of the game as Super Sonic. Also, by collecting every ring on the special stage, you get a 50,000 point bonus at the end.

SPACE HARRIER 2

- For a level select, press buttons A, B, C and the joypad Left or Right during the start sequence.

SPACE INVADERS '90

- On the intro screen, press and hold buttons A and C. Now press Start, then B, A and C for the level-select screen.

SPEEDBALL 2

- Enter LCLI CWAF O6XE ya3q 2bst -is1 gGVC to enter division one.
- Save your cash for the first few games. Better players will soon be available on the transfer market.
- Always finish as runners-up in division two, because the play-off game will give you a few extra pennies in your purse. Convincingly beat Steel Fury twice and then let the Renegades beat Deluxe (you) twice by 200 points. These sneaky tricks put you (Deluxe) and the Renegades up a league, and in the second season you should be able to put 350 points past the Renegades, while Hashwan and co can only manage 200. This means a healthy 30-point boost to help you towards that title.

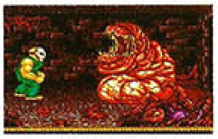
SPIDERMAN

- Before you meet the kingpin, investigate the maze and find the full web power-up. You'll need this to stop Mary Jane from falling into the fiery pit.

SPIDERMAN VERSUS THE KING-PIN

- On Nightmare mode at the warehouse, climb onto the first pile of crates, swing onto the next pile, beat up the bad guy, swing over the guard dog and land on the next pile then start crawling.
- When you get to the Sandman, carry on right to the edge of the screen to collect a full life power-up.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2



- Press A, B, C and Start together in game to reset – so be careful.
- Here are some level-select codes:

Level 2 – EDK NAI ZOL LDL
Level 3 – IDO GEM IAL LDL
Level 4 – ADE XOE ZOL OME
Level 5 – EFH VEI RAG ORD
Level 6 – ADE NAI WRA LKA
Level 7 – EFH XOE IAL LDL
Level 8 – EDK VEI IAL LDL

STEEL EMPIRE

- On the title screen, hold button B and press Start to start on level two.
- If you fancy 99 bombs, press C, A, C, A, Start and B on the ship-selection screen.
- If you fancy 99 lives, go to the options screen, set the difficulty to hard, set the stock to two and set the credits to one, and then play tune 65 on the soundtest option.

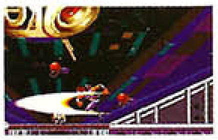
STORMLORD

- Pause the game, then press A, A, A, A, C, C, B, B, B, C, A. Now unpause and you'll have five extra lives.
- At any point in the action, pause your game and press C, B, B, B, A, A, A, A, C, C, A, A, A, A to skip to the end of the level.

STREETS OF RAGE

- For more continues press Left, Left, B, B, B, C, C, C and then Start when Game Over appears.
- Play to the end with a mate, both say yes to the question, go back to level six, continue to the end, fight it out between yourselves for the "bad ending".
- Move the cursor down to options. On the second joy pad press and hold down Right then press and hold A, B, then C. Now press Start on pad one and select your lives or level.

STRIDER



- On the airship, fall to the bottom, walk left, destroy all the bombs, climb to the top left and kill the panda!

SUPER HANG ON

- During the title sequence press A, B, C and Start together for a new difficulty option.
- Try these passwords:

5FF3F540F33504
FFHWKJOMBJOFDU

SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL

- Look at the carpark before the start. In the right-hand corner is Virgil Tracy's Thunderbird 2.
- Use this code to start with a four game lead:

JORQWVVRROOQSHPOGUIDEAM

SUPER MONACO GP

- Here are some level-select passwords for *Super Monaco GP*.

Race 2 – Brazil:

0961	4003	0000	0200
000N	R123	4567	O9AB
0CDE	F000	0000	0000
0000	0000	1200	F9DE

Race 3 – France:

0F8A	6033	0000	0300
000N	R123	4567	O9AB
0CDE	F000	0000	0080
0000	0000	2100	5F8D

Race 4 – Hungary:

0J8D	9233	6000	C000
0000	7123	4567	09AB
C8DE	F000	0000	0000
0000	0000	3200	759D

Race 5 – West Germany:

0P9H	B533	6000	L000
000O	7123	4567	0PAB
C8DE	F000	0000	0001
0000	0000	4200	ACF9

Race 6 – USA:

0VCH	D633	F000	P000
000K	N123	4L67	0PAB
C8DE	F000	0000	0000
0000	0000	5200	E09D

Race 7 – Canada:

05GH	F733	O000	S000
000K	N123	4L67	0PAB
C8DE	F800	0000	0080
0000	0000	6100	F7BA

Race 8 – Great Britain:

0BHL	HR33	7005	0000
000R	K123	4067	59AC
R8DE	F800	0080	0000
0000	0000	7200	41D1

Race 9 – Italy:

0HLM	K433	9005	0000
000G	KH23	4067	59AC
R8DE	F808	0080	0000
0000	0000	8200	5D53

Race 10 – Portugal:

0NLQ	MD43	9008	0000
000G	KH23	4067	59AC
R8DE	F808	0080	0080
0000	0000	9100	BE4D

Race 11 – Spain:

0MRR	QP73	9080	0000
000K	0023	4H67	59CA
B8DE	F808	0010	0001
0000	0000	A200	9352

Race 12 – Mexico:

1MV4	RRA3	90E0	0000
0004	0023	4167	59CA
B8DE	F888	0010	00G1
0G00	0000	B200	054A

Race 13 – Japan:

1V55	UTA3	90I0	0000
000K	0023	4H67	59CA
B8DE	F898	0010	0001
0000	0000	C200	DC75

Race 14 – Belgium:

189B	VVA3	90L0	0000
000K	0023	4H67	59CA
B8DE	FG98	0010	0001
0000	0000	D200	3241

Race 15 – Australia:

1HFC	21A3	90P0	0000
000K	0023	4H67	59CA
B8DE	FG9H	0010	0001
0000	0000	E200	6AB4

Race 16 – Monaco:

1QJI	42A3	90S0	0000
000K	0023	4H67	59CA
B8DE	FG9H	0010	0001
0000	0000	F200	65DA

Start in the madonna team with a World Championship title to your name:

4000	0000	0000	0000
0000	GGD5	3627	B14C
FA89	E000	0000	000I
0000	0000	G300	FA0F

- Finish in the top three on the Monaco circuit. Hold down buttons A, B and C as you finish in the top three on the wet circuit and you'll hold up your head instead of the trophy.
- Smash into the guy holding the chequered flag at the end of the Monaco race and he'll fly away into the background, loosing all your points.

SWORD OF SODAN

- Collect four Etherium potions and drink them all at once to warp to the next level.

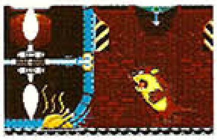
SWORD OF VERMILLION

- Cleanse a cursed sword at a church.

TASK FORCE HARRIER EX

- Place the cursor over the Config option and press Up, Down, Left, Right, A and C together, then B and Start simultaneously for more options.

TAZ-MANIA



- Plug in two joypads, press A, B, C and Start on both of them simultaneously on the title screen, pause the game, press B and then unpause the game to become invincible.
- Plug in two pads, press A, B, C and Start on both of them simultaneously on the title screen, pause the game, press C then unpause to select a level.
- On the arctic level near the end on a block of ice above some water, jump down to a hidden room full of bonus items.

TEAM USA BASKETBALL

- Here are the codes to get seven of the teams through to the final.

CIS vs Yugoslavia – P4T3DB9
ANGOLA vs Yugoslavia – 0DR7BBQ
CANADA vs Yugoslavia – FDT32B3
AUSTRALIA vs Italy – R0T7LBY
CHINA vs Slovenia – YNT7GB9
CROATIA vs United States – 08TWNBN
USA vs China – SXT7RC0

TECHNOCOP

- In any building area, pause the game, press C ten times, A five times, B twice and A ten times. You'll hear "Techno Cop" and get all your lives back.

TERMINATOR

- Always wait for the extra time bombs at the start of each level.

TEST DRIVE 2: THE DUEL

- When driving, press and hold down A, B and C for a secret options menu.
- Pick the Ferrari for superior acceleration.

TETRIS

- For a really fast game, press Start and Down at the same time at the start.

THUNDERFORCE 2

- Hold down buttons A, B and C and switch on. Still holding the buttons, press Start on the title screen for a secret menu screen.

THUNDERFORCE 3

- Pause the game then simultaneously press Up and B ten times, then B and Down ten times. Repeat the process to get all the weapons.
- Finish the game and then press buttons A, B and C to get the pilot to wink at you.

TIGER HELI

- On the Game Over screen, keep pressing C, B, A in that sequence for loads of extra lives.

TOEJAM AND EARL

- Go to level three, grab some wings, fall to level one, fly to the bottom left-hand corner, and then fall through the island to enter a secret level.
- The ship pieces are found on levels 2, 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23 and 25.
- At the end of the game, when you're told to follow the Yellow Brick Road, explore the bottom-right corner and top of the level instead.

TROUBLE SHOOTER

- If you want a level select, press C, Right and Start together on controller two on the title screen and then press Right, C and Start to advance the stage number.

TRUXTON

- On a boss level drop a smart bomb, then hit pause. Wait ten seconds, then unpause to kill the boss.

TURRICAN

- Select options on the menu, skip to the exit icon. Hold Down, and then quickly press A, B, B, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, B, A, A for more options.

TWIN COBRA

- Hit start to get to the green title screen, then press Up, Down, Right, Left, A, B, C and Start to see the end credits.
- For maximum weaponry, pause the game and press Up, Down, Left, Right and hold A while pressing Start to resume the game.

TWO CRUDE DUDES

- Select a two-player game and use player two as a chuckable weapon!

ULTIMATE TIGER

- For a level-select cheat press Up, Down, Left and Right on the title screen.

VALIS 3

- Hold Up, A, B and C, press Start, and hold it until a blank screen appears. When you release the buttons, the words "Select Map 000" appear. Now you can select your stage.

VERYTEX

- Pause the game, hold A, B and C, then press Down and Start for an extra life. Keep pressing Down and Start for more lives.

WANI WANI WORLD

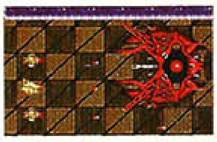
- Press reset twice when the Saga word appears on the screen. Then you'll fine yourself with 200 lives.

WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SAN DIEGO?

- Here are some codes to help you through the game.

Ace Time Detective – LHMNFGF
Capture Carmen – MJDFPDG
Super Time Sleuth – MJDFSGG
Super Ending – JHBHHXS

ZERO WING



- Stick to the homing missiles.

ARENA

So then, just how good are you at video games? Think you know everything, do you? Think again bub!

WACKY CHALLENGES

MEGA readers are really coming up with some strange challenges now. Keep it up. Thanks this month go to ***Derek Young*** from Preston and ***Allan Bonnet*** of Colchester for sending in this month's crazy challenges. They make a very welcome change from the ridiculous feats Neil keeps setting.

① DESERT STRIKE

Right, this is for all you budding chopper experts out there. Lets see if you can get your head round this one. On each campaign in the game you must take out the radar sites LAST. This will mean the enemy know you're coming and they will be a lot harder to kill.

② CASTLE OF ILLUSION: STARRING MICKEY MOUSE

Let's make this game a bit harder, shall we? Right, you're only allowed to bottom bounce your way through the game and you can use any weapons you like, such as the apples. There, that should make the game a bit more difficult.

③ MERCS

To make more of this game, you can use only the man who you last collected. So there's no swapping characters or anything like that, OK?

CRAZY GAME GENIE CODES

Judging by the lack of response to this corner of ARENA, it doesn't look like many people got Game Genies for Christmas. If you *have* got a Game Genie, send in your wacky codes and you could win a cart of your choice. Here's another code we've discovered, to show you what we're after.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

By entering the code SCRA – BZXO you can collect only the TV rings. This makes the game a great deal more difficult, which can't be a bad thing with *Sonic*, can it?

SCORE 0
TIME 0:11
RINGS 10
SONIC × 3

***Sonic* is made that much more difficult if you can collect only the TV rings, because it can take some time to actually find them**

④ DEVIL CRASH

This is a tough one to start with, but it's by no means impossible. Enter any bonus stage you fancy and then exit it without scoring any points. This doesn't really accomplish anything – it doesn't even make you look like a great gamesplayer – but it does mean you score less points. Crazy huh?

⑤ INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

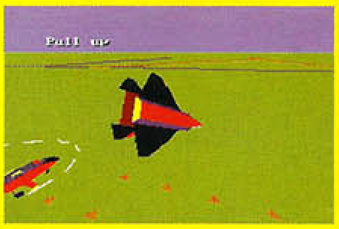
Indy may be famous for using his whip and never losing his hat, but try getting as far as you can in this game on one life and using only your fists. It's not easy, because some of those bad guys can punch with the best of them. The level two boss is fab. Ⓜ

STRANGE HAPPENINGS

Right, here we go with some more strange happenings from the bowels of Mega Drive games. Don't forget, we're looking for something strange and silly that happens in a game, no matter what it is. You may have seen Sonic make a guest appearance in an unlikely place, or maybe you've seen something even stranger? Whatever it may be, let us know.

If you do find something, then send it into us at the address shown in the little box in the right-hand corner of this page. Now that we've got all that out of the way, take a look at these two examples to see exactly what we mean.

Be careful when doing the *F-22 Interceptor* trick, because it crashes the game and you'll have to press Reset to start over again. The *Sonic 2* one is very strange indeed, and well worth a look for those of you (ie all of you) who have got the game. Right, enough of this useless wibble – let's get on with the show.



① F-22 INTERCEPTOR

On the options screen, select invincibility and turn the ground avoidance option off. Now start a mission and then crash your plane. Press Up and Start to view your plane from outside the cockpit and you'll see that it has transformed into a hole in the ground. The game now crashes and you'll have to reset it. To avoid disappointment, therefore, make sure that you're not playing the game for real. (That was a health warning brought to you by MEGA. Thank you for listening.)

SCORE 200
TIME 0:42
RINGS 2

② SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

This is definitely one for those strange people among you. Choose the two-player mode and play the secret stage. Let Sonic win the first leg, let Tails win the second and make sure Sonic is the victor of the third. Reset the game. Go to the options screen and it should show the player select as Sonic and Tails. Flick through the options until it says both Sonic and Tails. Press Start, and although the game is the same, the secret stages are actually much harder. Try it and see. And jolly good luck to you.

TELL US EVERYTHING OR ELSE...

This month's mystery prize (And when we say mystery we mean it. We don't even know what it is yet.) winner is *Derek Young* from Preston. Derek came up with a whole set of challenges and they were quite good as well.

Fancy getting your hands on a prize too? Well, all you have to do is come up with a crazy challenge, discover a Sega secret that not a lot of people know about, or find a strange happening in a game.

Once you've come up with something, send it to ARENA, MEGA, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. We'll search through the mail, choose the best effort and then pick a prize. Easy isn't it? Oh, and by the way *Mark* of Whitby, that secret was not a real secret. Everybody already knows that the Russian ice hockey team is sponsored by Sega.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

It's one big game, so here's a complete guide to cracking it

Rolo is a great game (it scored 89% in issue five of MEGA), but it doesn't have a battery back-up or a password system, so you can't stop playing and then start again from where you left it. You can play the game through to the end without completing all the levels, but this means you don't get to see the full end-sequence. Luckily, we at MEGA have cracked the game wide open and we're going to show you where the hidden map pieces are and how to get hold of them.

The game is split into five main levels and each of these levels is split again into stages. We explain each stage and then show you where to find all the various bits of map.

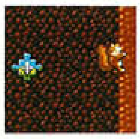
LEVEL 1: THE FOREST

This level isn't that tough to get through, but it represents a good practice run as it slowly introduces you to the rest of the game and gets you accustomed to solving the types of puzzle which you'll come across later.

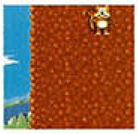
Read the description for each room, match it to the map in the middle of the page and (in the words of a particularly sad sports commentator when he used to do a kids programme called We are the Champions) away you go...

⑩ Look out for the big mummy hedgehog in the far left-hand corner of this room – she's easy to miss. What you've got to do before you confront her is pick up the small hedgehog with your trunk (assuming you've collected a vacuum cleaner), then hop over the exit, stand in front of "mummy hedgehog" and fire at her with the one in your trunk. She wakes up and that's it. Now all the other hedgehogs in the game are yours to pick up and use instead of trying to avoid them – they come in useful later on.

⑥ The idea here is to jump up and hit all the presents that fall down. If you miss three, the game is over.

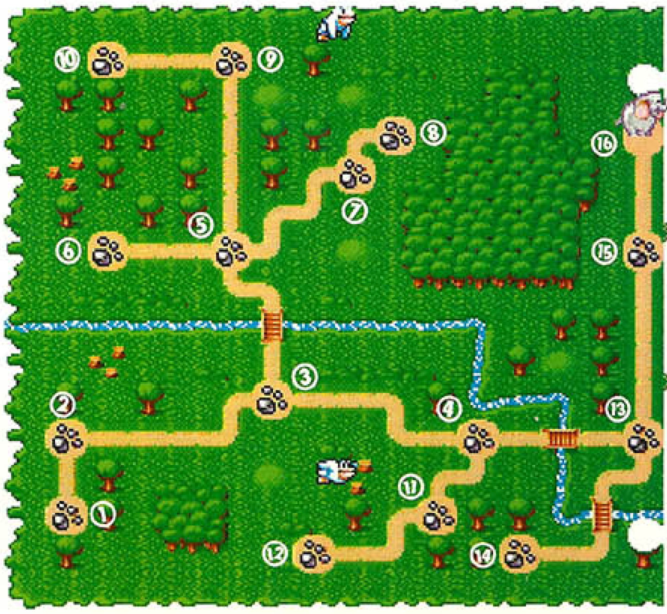


⑤ Go through this room in the following order. Get the key from the fifth mushroom, the squirrel from the third mushroom, use the squirrel to pick up the vacuum in the second mushroom, then pick up the rock in the first mushroom using your trunk. Throw the rock on the floor in the fourth mushroom and bounce off it to reach the mole. Dig through, jump on the blocks, and get the map piece.

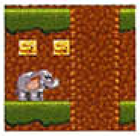


② This is the first room to have a map piece *and* a secret room in it. Collect the bunny and stand on the taller right-hand tree stump. Jump high to the right and get the map piece. Collect the squirrel, but don't go into the exit. Take control of the squirrel and jump over the exit. Hold onto the wall using button C and climb the wall all the way to the top. Jump to the right of the screen and you'll fall down into a room full of goodies. Enjoy the goodies, sacrifice the squirrel, and exit the level.

⑨ Here's another level with absolutely nothing hidden in it all. So there's really not a lot to tell you about here. I mean, the level is very straight forward too, so just finish it and get on with the rest of the game.



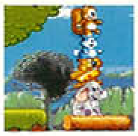
③ Get the bunny, go back to the left and stand on the branches of the tree. Jump up and grab the map piece.



⑫ The best route to use for this room is up the far left-hand side, where lives and points are in plentiful supply.

① There's a secret room in here. Rescue the bunny, go back to the start, jump into the tree, pick up the extra life and then fall into the flashing stars. Collect the points and get out.

⑦ From the tree stump, jump across all the gaps (you'll soon learn the pattern) and get the map piece.



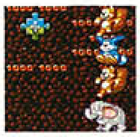
④ Get to the end of the level and get everyone on Rolo's back. Stand on the log to the left of the exit and ride it up to the map piece.

⑪ This level's all about jumping, so be careful. The best way to get through it is to use your bunny. Jump up and ride the platform down as far as it goes. Now jump off towards the other block and you can land more safely because you can see where you're landing. You need to find two logs so that Rolo can make the journey, but if you ride all the blocks down to the bottom, you can see them.

⑯ Don't be put off by this chap's size, because he's really quite easy to beat. Wait next to him while he flexes his muscles and as soon as the dumbbells break, jump up and bounce off them. Bounce off his head and you've hit him. Hit him a few more times and you've successfully completed the forest level. Well done.

⑧ There's nothing hidden here, just keep jumping right to the end, collecting as many points as you can.

⑮ You need to be careful on this level, but thankfully the hedgehogs are now on your side. Get to the washing machine by jumping left over the exit and then go back right over the exit and through the small tunnel. Go through the minecart section and out to the right. Finish the level and you'll find you are in another completely different map section. Go back into the level, then to the left and back into the minecart section and you'll see some flashing stars above your head. Jump into these and you'll be warped back to the exit and the forest level.



⑬ The map piece is hidden in a secret room, which is through the wall, to the left of the block above the exit. Anyone can go in, but the bunny is the only one who can jump high enough to get inside.

⑭ This level is a bit of a guessing game. When the boxes have finished spinning, hit one box on a row and three prezzies will fall out. Continue to do this until you've emptied all the boxes.

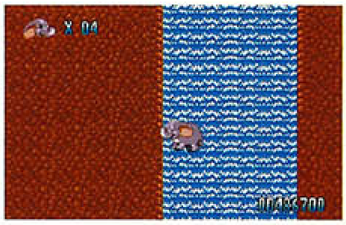
PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASED: Out now

MEGA SAYS: Well, the game with the much touted *Mario*-style gameplay makes it onto the Mega Drive. This game is huge. There are loads of secret rooms and bonuses to find and the challenge is tough. The only omission is a password option, but then you can't have everything, can you?

RUNNING OUT OF LIVES?



Here's that hole in the wall. Jump through and you can pick up three more lives. Useful eh?

As you already know, when you've completed a level you'll see Rolo's footprint. You can still re-enter this level, but everything has disappeared. Well, there is, in fact, one level which has a secret passage that lets you get three more lives: the third part on the first level. Follow these instructions and you can keep going back into the room as many times as you like.

Fall down the hill and down the waterfall. Keep going right so you land on the ground. Now turn back left and jump through the hole you'll see in the wall. This will bring you out up top and you'll fall down to earth. On your way down, move right to collect those three lives.

GET A GRIP!

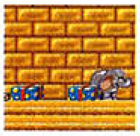
- ⬆⬇⬅➡ Makes Rolo crouch and move left or right
- Ⓐ This is your speed-up button. Useful for those really long jumps
- Ⓑ The incredibly useful jump button. You should use this a lot
- Ⓒ The special button. It allows each character to use its special abilities

LEVEL 2: THE DESERT

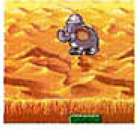
Following the comparative easiness of level one, there are some really hard levels in the desert. Some of them will take several attempts to get right, and some will take even longer. Still, if you're running short of lives, you can always pop back to part three in the forest and pick up as many as you like. So, assuming you're all stocked up and ready to go, let's get on with the desert level...

① The worms may look cute, but there's absolutely nothing special hiding in here. In fact...

② ... there's nothing special in here either. So you might as well move swiftly onto part three.



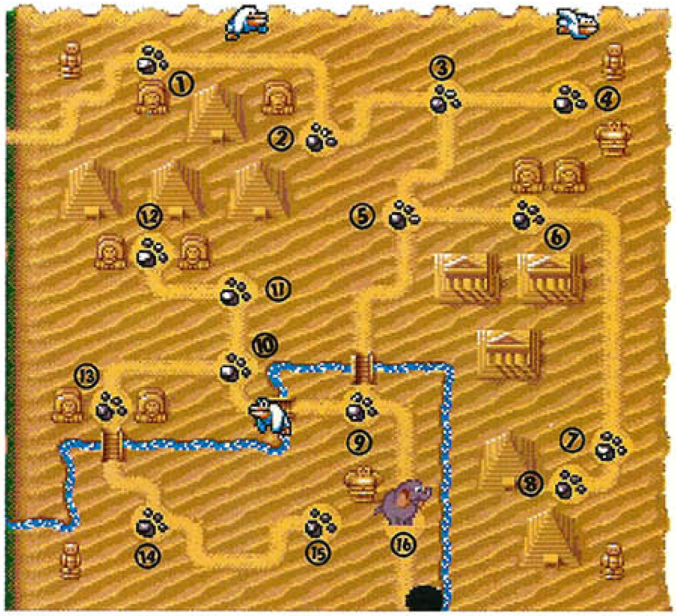
⑫ Bonus Room. The same sort of thing as usual. There are more boxes to hit and more prizes to pick up.



⑪ It's slippy platform time again. Don't bother looking for anything, because there's nothing here.

⑬ This is one very dodgy level, because if you make one, just one, mistake, you don't get a second chance. Take out the ringmaster using the water, but then watch out for the flying things, because if they hit you, you'll miss the chance to pick up an animal and you'll have to do the level again.

⑭ The animal traps here are deadly. Yes, one touch and you're dead. They are, however, quite dumb and you can fool them into jumping over and past you. Once you've figured out how to do this, you can then work your way around and rescue your friend.

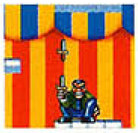


⑩ Stand on the first block and get the extra life. To get the map piece you need to get a rock, and to do that you need to go right. When you've got the rock, go back, fire it at the third block and pick up the map piece. Now move on and finish the level.

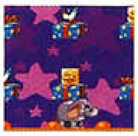
⑮ Bonus Room. Yes, it's the same old thing again. It's just another case of falling down and collecting everything you see. These bonus rooms may have started to get a bit tedious, but they do provide you with essential points. And what do points mean? A greater chance of killing the boss, that's what!

③ There's a hidden map piece here. Climb up the platforms to the top and you need to bounce off one of the bees to reach it.

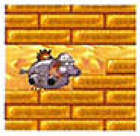
⑨ There is another map piece to be found here. Work your way down to the bunnies and then take one of them over. Jump carefully across the spikes bit by bit and then stand on the block at the end. Ride across on it and then, just before you reach the exit, jump up and get the map piece which Rolo couldn't reach.



⑯ Boss – Knife Man. As long as you attack this guy quickly, you should be able to defeat him easily. Jump on his head, while avoiding his knives. Follow him around, clockwise, and be quick about it. It's easy really.



④ Bonus Room. Same sort of bonus room as you will have already seen before – you know, the three by three one. Wait until everything stops spinning and choose three boxes to jump up at.



⑤ This level is the first time you'll really see the hedgehogs coming into their own. Go around the level and collect all the animals you possibly can. When all that's done, find the nearest hedgehog and get him to stick on your back. Now float (because you should have collected the helium along the way) down by the spikes and then go to the right. You'll be floating along a passageway and than you'll see a small gap. Guide the hedgehog through the small gap and he'll collect the map piece. You've done everything you have to do, so now get out of the level.

⑥ There's nothing special about this one, except that the ringmaster is to the left of you instead of to the right.

⑦ This is the first incredibly frustrating level. The trick though is to jump from the swinging platforms onto the slippery ones and straight off again. Stop on the slippery ones and you'll lose all your momentum. Get across, get the key, and you've got to come all the way back out again. It's all in the timing, so be careful.

⑧ Bonus Room. This is a different type of room altogether. You fall down the gaps and collect the points as you fall. It's pretty evenly balanced out so there's no set way of falling. Just jump and go.

LEVEL 4: BEFORE LEVEL 3?

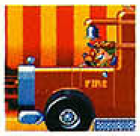
Right, before you go any further, you may notice that you are on level four. You might as well do the separate bits on level four (the first six parts) and then work on level three. However, to keep things in order we'll show you how to do level three first and then move on to level four.

LEVEL 3: INDIANA JONES LEVEL

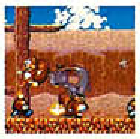
This level should probably be called desert level part 2, but seeing as Rolo wears his Indy hat most of the time, we'll call it the Indiana Jones level instead. This is the first time a warp is used in the game, and at first this can be a bit puzzling..

① There's nothing at the very start of this stage, so just do the level and get on with the rest of the game.

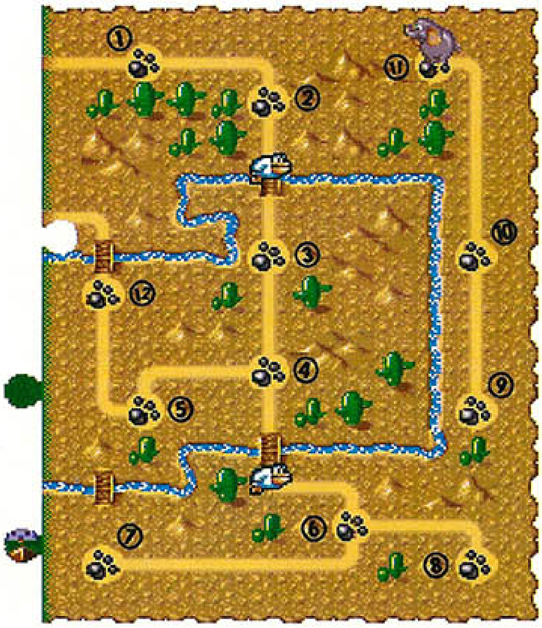
② Again, there's nothing hidden here, but make the most of the calm before the storm.

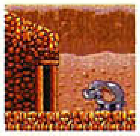


⑫ Boss – Fire Engine. Although these guys are firing at you, you actually need the bullets to attack them. Bounce off the bullets and take out the guy on the top first. Oh, and be careful when the engine runs at you, you need to be in the air or you'll get squished. Once he's gone, go for the lowest guy and then the driver.

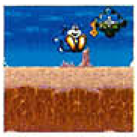


⑤ Having collected the first map piece, you now have to collect all your pesky little friends.

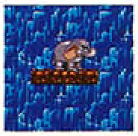




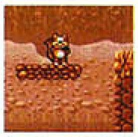
⑦ Mmm, this little doorway may look enticing, but there's nothing special in here, just lives and points.



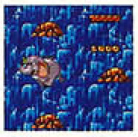
④ Get to the exit and use the bunny to jump up and reach the (no longer hidden) map piece. Hoorah!



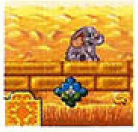
⑥ Work out the movement of these platforms and work your way up to the top, where you'll find two map pieces.



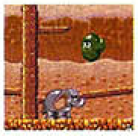
③ This is a tricky level. You need to ignore the first two moles you come across or you won't be able to use the squirrel later on. Use the squirrel, rescue the animals up top, then go back for the moles.



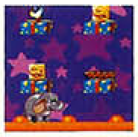
⑪ Points Room. This may look easy, but you need to watch that you don't fall down as you bounce off the rocks. Don't leave the room without collecting everything, because it won't be there when you come back.



⑩ This one's simple. Get the vacuum cleaner, pick up the rock, throw it at the block on the right, and get the map piece.



⑨ You warp here from level 4, and levels 9,10 and 11 have nothing hidden in them at all. When you've finished these levels, go back through the warp to level 4 and then you've finished this section of the stage.



⑧ Bonus Room. It's time to hit those boxes and collect those prezzies, but if you miss three, it's all over.

THE REAL, ONE AND ONLY, ENDING

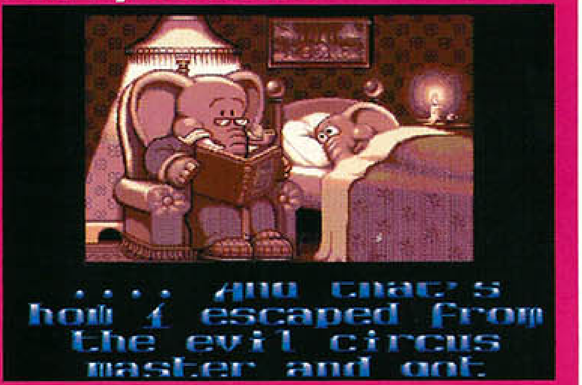
Want to know why we decided to do a complete solution to *Rolo To The Rescue?* Well, our man Andy Dyer thought that he'd use an Action Replay cartridge to get through to the end. So, after many attempts, the lucky git found an infinite lives code. He got to the end of the game easily enough, but it then took him at least three hours to figure out how to kill the big boss, Ringmaster McSmiley.

Still, he finally did it, and promptly gathered everyone around the screen to look at the end sequence (first one he has ever seen you know). Unfortunately for him, because he hadn't completed ALL the levels of the game he got a poor man's end sequence. You see, although Rolo did rescue his mom, some of his friends remain captured and so Rolo must resolve himself to a life as a failure (much like Andy himself actually).

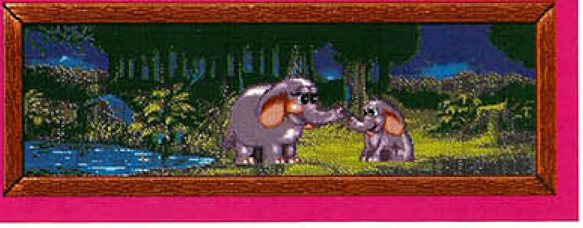
So, we thought we'd play the game all the way through, yes, every level, so that *you* don't end up feeling as humiliated as young Dyer did. And no, we didn't use the Action Replay cartridge either.

As you can see, the end screenshot shows Rolo (as a rather old fool) talking about his adventures to his grandson (presumably), Rolo Junior. Yes, it's all very cute and you even get a corny joke at the end. We won't tell you exactly what it is, you'll just have to play the game through for yourself. Oh, and you also get to see a picture of Rolo reunited with his Mom. Aaaaaahhhh!

Right, that's it, the end. If there are any particular game end sequences you'd like to see or if you'd like to see your favourite game Ripped 'n' Tipped, then let us know. Send in your suggestions to Rip 'n' Tip, MEGA, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW and we'll get on the case.

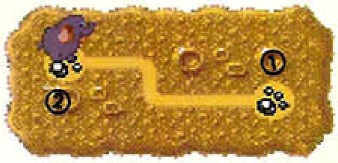


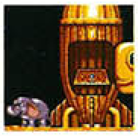
.... and that's
how I escaped from
the evil circus
master and got



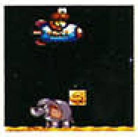
LEVEL 5: THE MOON

Level five before level four, what *is* going on? Well, there was a little hole to fill on this page, so we thought we'd show you the James Pond bit now.





① Get down out of the rocket, go to the left, pick up the essential map piece and then exit the level.



② Say hello to James, pick up those lives, and warp to the other circus area (number 12 on the circus level).

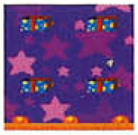
LEVEL 4: CIRCUS LAND

You're closing in on McSmiley (the final boss) and this is the last stage (yes, I know that the moon is a separate level, but it doesn't really count, because you don't have to do anything). Level four is the biggest one, with an astonishing (not to say breathtaking) 24 levels. There is another warp in here and this time it'll take you via the moon, where you'll run into James Pond (though what he's doing up there is anyone's guess. Mind you, if an elephant can go to the moon, why the goodness shouldn't a fish?). Anyway, James just pops up, gives you a few extra lives and then promptly pops off again. Strange huh?

③ Bonus Room. Ride up and down the ramps on this level and pick up the points as you go.

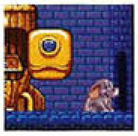
② Collect all the animals from the top of the castle, but when you collect the bunny on the far right wall, take control of him and jump up and grab the map piece.

④ There are no hidden extras in here. Just work your way through the level and get on with the next one.



⑭ Bonus Room. Arrrrggghhhh! More boxes, more bonuses, more points, more, more, more, more...

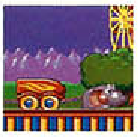
⑬ No map pieces to find here, but there are some bonus things above the exit. Bounce on the bees to climb up the platforms to find them.



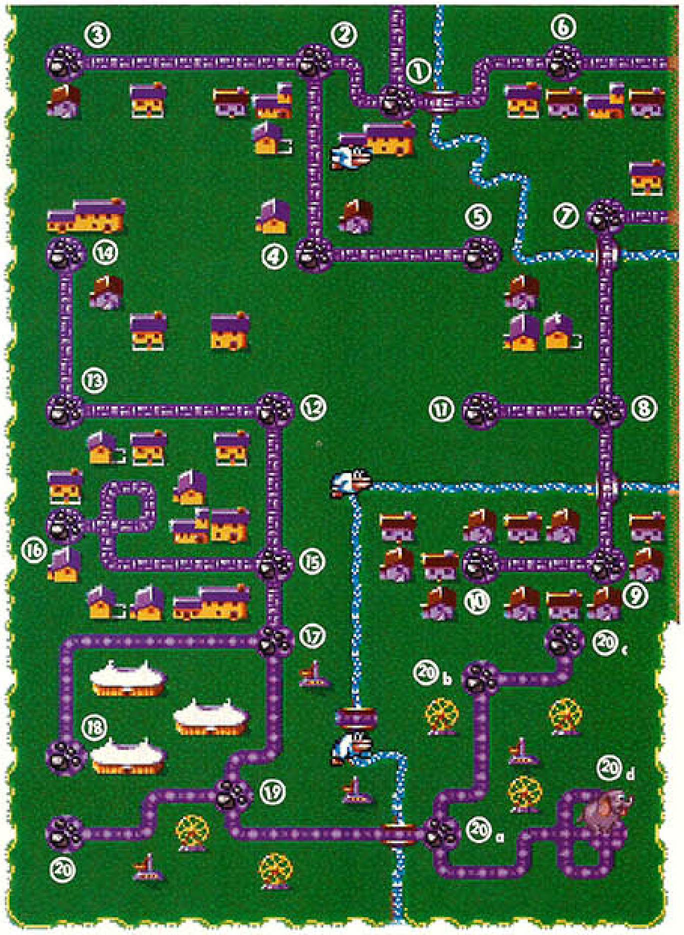
⑫ There are two hidden map pieces here, one in front of the exit and one off screen to the right.

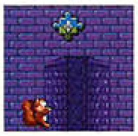
⑯ Bonus Room. Go up the left-hand side because you'll be much better off, but as you get to the top you'll see a doorway. Go to the left and pick up the 100,000 points, because that's the end.

⑱ Get the key, and go back to the right. Bounce off the ghosts to get over the spikes and rescue your friend.



⑳ Bonus Room. This is just guess work really. It is entirely up to you which way you choose to go.





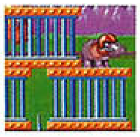
⑮ Pick up the squirrels and go back out. Climb up to the doorway and use the squirrel to climb up and reach the piece.

⑰ Rescue the bunnies, hop over the level exit and get the map piece. As simple as that really...

⑲ Ride the cart to the end and pick up all your mates, walk through the exit. To get the map piece, go back into the room, ride the cart, and before you run into the crates, jump into them and Rolo will spring out and over the top.

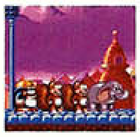
⑳ **c)** A tough penultimate level, but you need to bounce off the ghosts all the way up to the exit.

⑳ **b)** This is level 18 all over again. The scenery is the same and you do exactly the same thing.

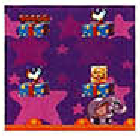


⑳ **a)** Make your way carefully to the helmet and then charge through the rest of the level. About halfway through it there's a map piece, but it's behind a cage so be careful not to miss it.

① Go left from the start and jump on the top of the post. Wait, ride up on it and get the map piece. Also, when you get to the end, run right over the exit for another map piece.



⑥ Unfortunately there is nothing new or exciting in here. Just go through the room and then move on.



⑤ Bonus Room. It's those nine boxes again. Same rules apply as in the previous three stages of the game.

⑦ Again, there is nothing hidden or special in here. So, have a little wander about, find the exit and get out.

⑧ Bounce off the last plant-type thing near the exit in order to get the map piece and finish the level.

⑪ Run across (as fast as any elephant can), get into the rocket and fly to the moon (level five).

⑨ Thank goodness we're near the end of the game, because, again, there's nothing happening here.

⑩ Bonus Room. Yes, it's that time again. Just hit those boxes as they fall from the sky and prepare for lift off.

⑳ **d)** Boss – McSmiley. This guy is tough (as you'd expect) and you can take only one hit from him. He has three modes of attack and three positions from which to attack you. When he's on the left, you should be in the right-hand corner to avoid the lasers, and when he's on the right, you should be on the left. When he's in the middle, stand below and slightly to the left of the platform to avoid everything. You can get one hit in from each position and then you must run to safety. You should have built up plenty of lives by now, so don't worry if you can't get the hang of this immediately.

TERMINATOR 2

Well, Arnie can do it, but now it's *your* turn to save the world from Judgement Day. The question is, are you up to it?

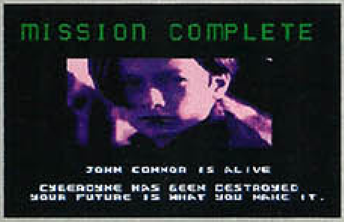
PUBLISHER: Acclaim

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASED: January '93

MEGA SAYS: It may be very similar to *Operation Wolf* and all that, but it's good clean shoot-'em-up fun and that's all that really counts, isn't it? FUN, FUN, FUN...

Did you know that there are TWO endings to this game? Do you want to know how to see the real ending? Then read this level-by-level guide to *Terminator 2: The Arcade Game* and you'll know all about it. This Rip 'n' Tip guide is also dedicated to all those people who wrote to the Mega Medic asking for help with level three.



MISSION COMPLETE

JOHN CONNOR IS ALIVE

CYBERDYNE HAS BEEN DESTROYED
YOUR FUTURE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT.

This is the real ending, not the normal one. Clever, aren't we?

GET A GRIP!

Ⓤ Ⓓ Ⓛ Ⓡ Moves the cursor around the screen

Ⓐ Fires your machine gun or mini gun

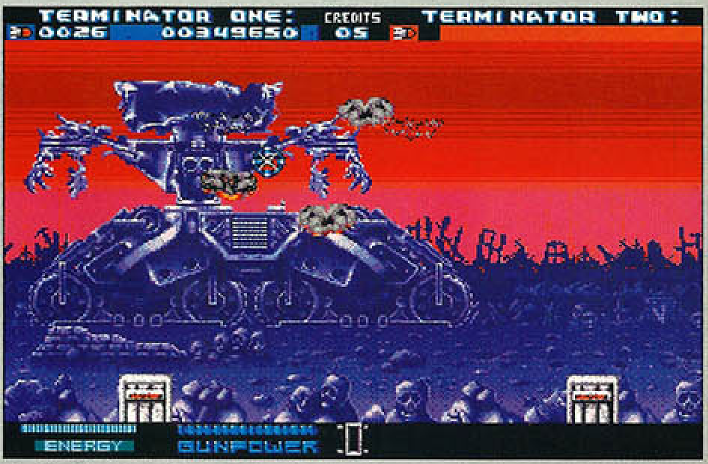
Ⓑ Fires your missiles or the shotgun

LEVEL ONE

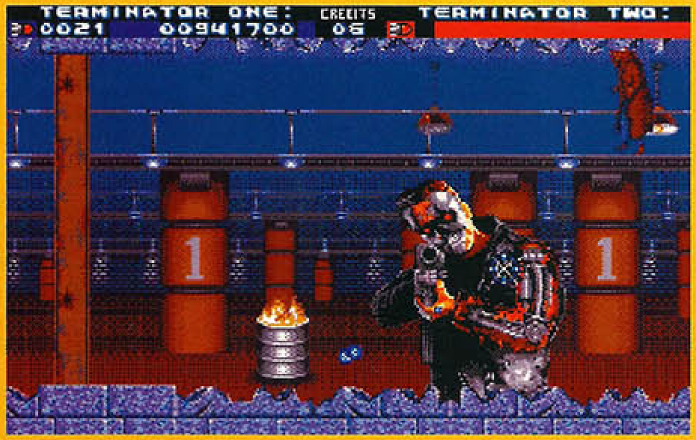
It's always useful to have an easy level at the start of a game so that you can get used to the control system and relax into things. Well, the first level may be easy enough, but the boss is a bit of a pain in the cybernetics. You need to take him out piece by piece while destroying what he's shooting at you.

The best tactic (and one which applies throughout the entire game) is to save up your missiles for the boss. Take this guy out by concentrating your machine-gun fire on his "arms" and fire a few missiles as well just to make sure.

Then take out his head, blowing up the missiles that fire out from his main body. When his head has blown away, you need to concentrate on the middle part. The boss isn't really that hard, but you do need to be ready for whatever he throws at you.



The first level may be easy, but the boss is a toughie. You've got this thing on the ropes, so keep attacking and then you can get on with the second level



Nice looking guy, isn't he? Oh, and if you're really sadistic, you can take a pot shot at the old woman. I mean, if you do hit her, you'll lose only 250,000 points. There's nothing like living on the edge, so go for it

LEVEL TWO

This level doesn't have a boss, so don't think there's anything big coming up, because there isn't. You know how to take out all the other Terminators who appear on the screen, but the newies on this level are those blobs with the machines inside them. The best tactic to use against these things that fall down from the ceiling is to blow them up, using a missile, before the machines inside them spill out. If you don't do this, you'll spend too much time aiming for them and you'll probably get shot a lot. Get your power-ups and things from the light bulbs and conserve your ammo, because there's not a lot of it around. Make sure you don't hit the old ladies who are mysteriously taking a walk, because they'll cost you some serious points, and we all like points, don't we? This level shouldn't stress you out too much – it really is quite simple. The real problem that most of you seem to be having, however, is just around the corner...

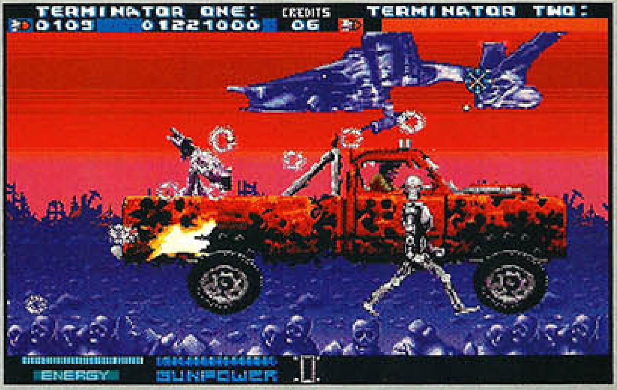
LEVEL THREE

This is possibly the hardest level to get through, that is if you don't know the secret of the black mag... Sorry, that is if you don't know the secret of how to play it. So here it is.

Although the Terminators cause you damage as they walk across the screen, you should really pay all your attention to the flying ships that blow up the truck. It's all about timing your missiles so that they are already in the air when the ships appear.

They don't always appear left, then right, then left again, but their pattern does remain the same every time you play, so memorise it. You can afford to make a few mistakes and you can even die, but learn the pattern and you should be able to get through.

If it takes you a few times to get it right, don't worry. Once you've got it sussed though, you'd be better of starting again from level one, because you really will need those continues later on in the game when things get very tough.



Just anticipate when the flying ships will appear on screen and let fire with those missiles. This may stump you early on, but once you've figured it out, it's really easy

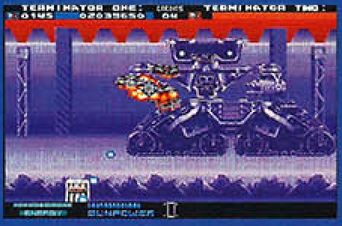
LEVEL FOUR

You're nearing the first goal in your quest – you're about to get transported back to the year 1992. The mid boss on this level is the same as the end boss on the first level, so use the same tactics to get rid of him. There are plenty of things to pick up here, so you need to be very alert because you'll need them at the end.

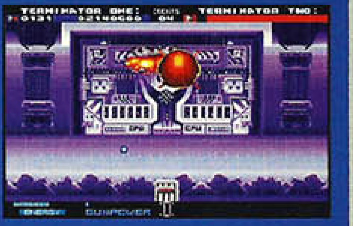
When you get through to the end of the level, you need to concentrate on the outer bits of the machine first, and leave the bits from which the missiles are coming until last. You will take a lot of hits, maybe even losing a life, and you'll need to be quick on the missiles as well as the machine gun. Make sure you get rid of plenty of missiles, because that cuts down the time it takes to blow this thing up.

If you successfully blow up the machine, you'll be magically transported to the past, where you must get after the T-1000 and save the life and future of the resistance leader, John Connor.

And you thought that the first four levels of the game were tough, well you ain't seen nothing yet. Just have a look at what's in store for you on the later levels.



It's déjà vu time as you run up against the first-level boss. Careful though, this might be his big brother



You can take out the missiles with your machine gun, but they tend to come a bit quickly so don't bother

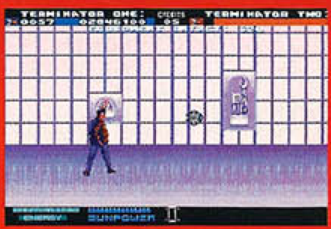
LEVEL FIVE

If you succeed at this part of the game, you will then be allowed to finish the game properly. This is the Cyberdene Systems level in which, just like in the film, you must get into the factory and pick up the Terminator chip and arm, that are being used to forward computer research.

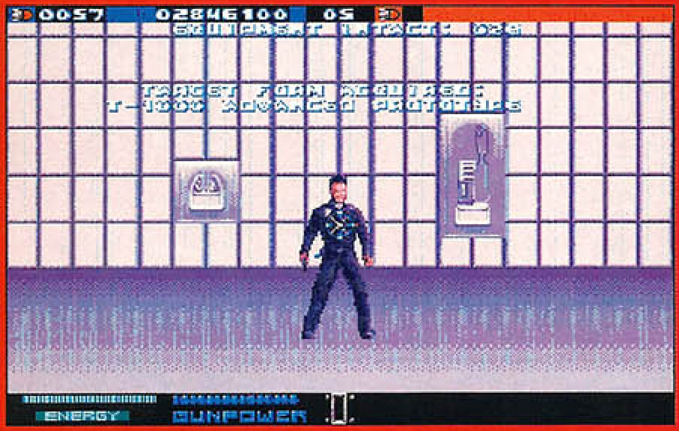
You have a damage counter at the top of the screen and you must blow up as many things as possible. If you fail to blow up everything, then Cyberdene Systems still exist and the technology will still get used. This level is very reminiscent of the plot of the film and it translates very well indeed.

This part of the game is also quite good fun, because you get the chance to use a few more different weapons, including the shotgun and mini gun.

There are no bosses, just loads of people to blow up and lots of damage to be done. This is where the game is either finished properly or not, so make sure you take out everything or you won't get to see the end.



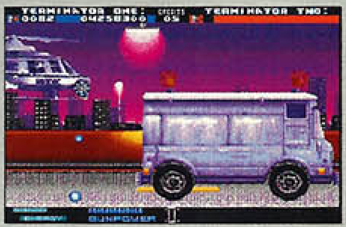
Here we see young John Connor picking up the Terminator arm and chip so that they can be destroyed



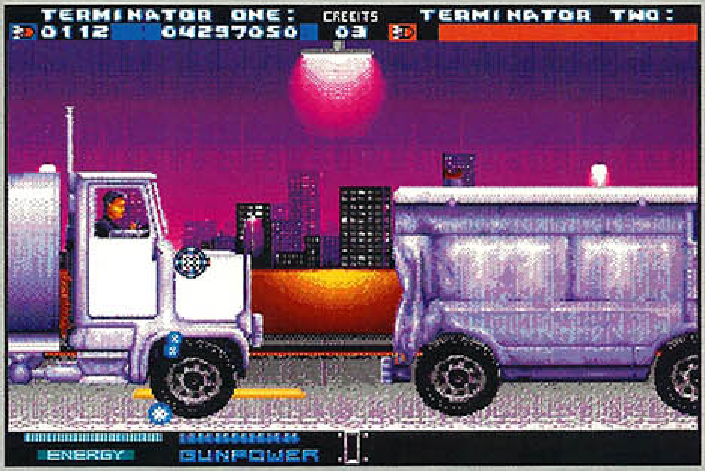
Oo-er! Things have just got a little bit tougher with the arrival of the T-1000 (the updated version of yourself). Still, you are supposed to be big Arnie and he looks a right wimp (just don't tell him I said so)

LEVEL SIX

This level is very similar to level three, not only in the way it plays, but also because it's very tough. Sarah and John Connor are making their escape in a van and the T-1000 is after them in a helicopter. You, as the Terminator, must stop the T-1000 by firing your machine gun when the helicopter approaches the van. If T-1000 touches the van, it will explode and you'll fail. Fire at him, but remember you need to be very quick. Just aim for the front of the chopper and fire. When you've beaten him in the helicopter, he turns to (as opposed to turning into) an articulated truck. You'll know when he has changed from the helicopter to the truck, because Arnie says "excellent" during the change. To defeat the truck you need to concentrate your attack on the front of it using your missiles and machine gun at the same time. He'll still touch the van, but if you fire at him, he can't cause that much damage.



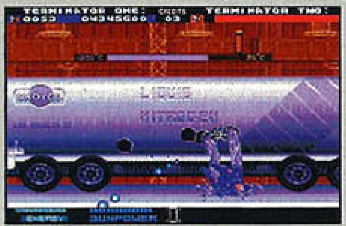
The best tactic to use here is to leave your sight at the back of the truck, then you're ready for the T-1000



As long as you fire enough ammunition, quickly enough, the truck loses its momentum and doesn't cause that much harm to the van. You'll need to hit him about five times to get rid of him for good though

LEVEL SEVEN

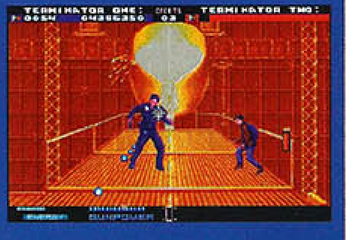
More closely related film action (Good this, isn't it? It's a shame more film licence games don't have such close tie-ins.) as you try to cool down the T-1000's temper. On this level he walks left to right in front of the Liquid Nitrogen tanker and you must knock holes in it. Knock him over so that he cools down and that makes his body temperature fall. When his temperature gauge falls off the end, he'll freeze up and (as in the film) you'll move onwards. It takes a while to get right, but this level isn't really that hard. You're now on to level eight, the final scene as it were. You've nearly done it, so keep it up.



That's it, you're doing well. Punch those holes in the tanker using your shotgun, then knock him over. Cool it boy (sorry about that)

LEVEL EIGHT

You won't know you've moved onto level eight, because it just scrolls to the right. Pick up as many shotgun shells as you can, because you'll need them. When the screen stops scrolling, you'll see the vat of molten steel, John Connor and the T-1000. Here you must blow the T-1000 to the edge of the vat using the shotgun (be careful not to knock him over or you'll have to start again) and then catch the gun that falls down from above. Now, very quickly, hit him on the chest with the gun and he'll fall down to his doom. Well done, you've completed the game.



Just like in the film, you've got to get the T-1000 to the edge of the molten steel and then watch as he falls over to his doom

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MEGA TOP 100 CARTS • MEGA TOP 100 CARTS • MEGA TOP 100 CARTS • MEGA
TOP
100

What's the difference between this month's Top 100 and that of last month? At first glance you might think "not a lot", but then you would be mistaken, wouldn't you? Four new releases have come straight into the top 12 and there are more games for sale or swap than ever before. You'll also find reviews of three, although not classic, indisputably established Mega Drive games. So, enthuse over the new entries, act on the readers' ads and muse over the past masters...

1. JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93 (INC. *MADDEN* AND *MADDEN '92*)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

43 YARD PUNT
#27 RETURNS
41 YARD GAIN

The third version of the best game on your Mega Drive and it's been improved upon again. If you're fed up with playing through the normal teams, try your hand against the best teams of all time. There are eight Superbowl-winning sides to play against and you can even enter the best of the best playoff to see who is ultimately the best.

John Madden Football '93 has all the playability of the other two versions and more. One word of caution though: if you own either the original *John Madden American Football* or *John Madden '92*, don't buy this version expecting a whole new game.

MEGA says: The best just got better, but not by that much.

TO SWAP: *John Madden Football*
0902 785886

TO SWAP: *John Madden '92*
Swap/Sell £25 – 0782 313177

WANTED: *John Madden '93*
Swap for *John Madden '92* plus £12 – 081 314 1950

2. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

Hey, you want top grade video game entertainment? Then you got it. This game has fast, smooth colourful graphics, top sound and playability that would make most game programmers' eyes water. Even if you do finish it, you've still got the two-player races and all those time challenges to have a go at. What is the fastest time possible for the Emerald Hill Zone act one?

MEGA says: You might find it too easy to finish, but it does leave the original sobbing in a damp corner.

3. MICRO MACHINES

Publisher: Codemasters
Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

We love it, and if you buy it, you will too. It may not be the best looking or sounding game in the world, but the gameplay and playability is amazing and the head-to-head fun rivals that of even the *John Madden* series.

With loads of courses for the one-player game, the two-player tournament game, and 12 different characters to choose from, this game is going to be slotted into your Mega Drive for a very long time to come.

MEGA says: Frantic two-player action and a tough one-player challenge make for a fantastic game whichever way you look at it. Buy it, play it and you won't regret it.

4. NHLPA HOCKEY (INC. EA HOCKEY)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

Just as *John Madden '93* remained firmly fixed to its predecessor's roots, so does this, and the new version is just as much a classic as the original.

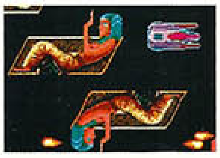
The top-down scrolling viewpoint still works beautifully, and the gameplay is as perfect as you could ever hope for it to be. Mind you, just like in the real thing, the best bit is when the gloves come off and the punch-ups start. Not as involved as *John Madden Football*, and the naïve or short-sighted player will tell you that scoring's more down to luck than skill, but for nerve-tingling tension that's absolutely second-to-none you still won't find a pulse-raiser much better (or tougher to master) than this.

MEGA says: Even better than the original (MEGA rated it 92% – it would have got more if it hadn't been a sequel). *NHLPA Hockey* is bigger, better and bloodier than its older brother, and it truly kicks. It is a fantastic game, which no Mega Drive owner should be without.

FOR SALE: *NHLPA Hockey*
£23 – 0923 213661

5. HELLFIRE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Hellfire, the only serious competition to *Aero Blasters* in the space-blast department, is number one in a different field. If the Mega Drive's ever seen a more accurate coin-op conversion than this, we'd like to know what it is. A clever and imaginative shoot-'em-up, *Hellfire* makes you think before you zap with four switchable weapon systems which, if you're going to make any progress through the game, have to be employed with expert speed and accuracy. The end-of-level bosses have had a bit more thought put into their design than the usual "find the weak spot and sit and pummel it for a couple of minutes" routine, and the graphics change enough from level to level to make it a real joy to discover what's in store in each new stage. You get a lot of continues, which makes it a bit easy to complete, but hey – nothing's perfect.

MEGA says: Great stuff, although it pales a bit in the frenetic action department when you put it alongside *Aero Blasters*. If you find that one a bit too demanding, though, this'll be right up your street.

TO SWAP: *Hellfire*
(Jap) Swap plus £2 – 0768 899773

FOR SALE: *Hellfire*
£20 – 0562 69805
(Jap) £25 – 0768 899773

6. STREETS OF RAGE 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

Well, after all the fuss and bother over the first official English 16-Mbit game, it's finally arrived – the follow up to *Streets of Rage*. We reviewed it in issue four of MEGA, but we didn't play it enough to give it a mark. Now it's out and it's every bit as good as we'd hoped. You won't find a better beat-'em-up on the Mega Drive and it's even better than some arcade ones too. Additional features include two new characters (Max and Skate), a head-to-head mini game, amazing graphics, the best ever sound on the Mega Drive and playability as well. You could do a lot worse.

MEGA says: You won't find it tough enough if you play on easy level with loadsa continues. So, if you're a hotshot gamesplayer, do yourself a favour and play the game on hard level with only a couple of continues. And then if you finish, see if you can do it with every character.

7. ROAD RASH 2 (INC. ROAD RASH)

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

Not entirely different to *Road Rash*, but it improves on the original enough to make it even more enjoyable. The two-player mode split-screen is a god-send and the intense rivalry it produces is unbeatable. The one-player mode is also that bit tougher, and with more bikes and better graphics and sound this really is a great improvement. If you've got the original *Road Rash*, you might even consider buying this because of the two-player game, which is almost worthy of the price of the game itself.

MEGA says: What a game! Speed, violence and bikes – what more could you ask for?

FOR SALE: *Road Rash*
£10 – 071 435 3428
£15 – 081 390 2751
£20/Swap – 0983 840353

TO SWAP: *Road Rash*
0902 785886

8. PGA TOUR GOLF 2 (INC. PGA TOUR GOLF)

Publisher: EA
Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

What was wrong with the original *PGA Tour Golf?* Well, not a lot actually. Perhaps you could have done with a few more courses and possibly some other bits and bobs to improve the game generally. Well, that's what *PGA Tour Golf 2* does. There are three more courses, the chance to put draw and fade on the ball and all sorts of other options. There's even a bit of speech in there as well. Now what more do you want?

MEGA says: The best multi-player game has been improved and if you and your mates like nothing better than playing a round, this is for you. Be careful though if you've got the original, because this one isn't drastically different from the previous one.

FOR SALE: *PGA Tour Golf*
£20 – 081 319 1068
Sell £20/Swap – 0559 362265

TO SWAP: *PGA Tour Golf*
For *Quackshot* – 0226 764646

9. SUPER MONACO GP 2 (INC. SUPER MONACO GP)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

Super Monaco GP was the most popular driving coin-op before *Out Run*, and the staggering graphics were thought by many to be completely impossible to simulate on a Mega Drive. And, indeed, they were, but disappointment turned to joy within seconds of loading this cart into the slot – the graphics may only be alright, but the gameplay is astonishing. Superb, definable control, high-speed adrenaline-pumping driving, *and* a bit of strategic depth to keep things interesting after the first few days.

The sequel improves significantly on the earlier game especially in the area of car handling, but with something that started off as fab as *Super Monaco GP*, that's still just window-dressing.

MEGA says: The competition isn't really up to much as far as Formula One racing goes (yet), but even so, you'd have to go a long, long way to come up with a better driving game than this one.

FOR SALE: *Super Monaco GP 2*
£25 – 0493 722367

TO SWAP: *Super Monaco GP 2*
0494 837769

10. LEMMINGS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

180 one-player levels, 20 two-player

levels and addictive puzzling gameplay that's going to keep you stumped for an incredibly long time. Excellent use of a password system and a stunningly easy control system make this a must for all gamers.
MEGA says: It's addictive, brain teasing and we can't get Neil away from it. What more of a recommendation do you need?
FOR SALE: *Lemmings*
£23 – 0923 213661
TO SWAP: *Lemmings*
0282 775527

11. QUACKSHOT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Yes, it's another platformer; yes, it's another Disney licence; yes, it's a bit of a clone of *Castle Of Illusion*; but none of that matters one little bit. Why not? Because *Quackshot* is excellent fun. This is the game that *Fantasia should* have been. It looks lush, it sounds lovely, and it's action-quacked from start to finish.
MEGA says: We say get it!
FOR SALE: *Quackshot*
£20/Swap – 0983 840363
£20 – 0672 62457
(Jap) £20/Swap – 081 514 0756
£20 – 0952 613477

12. ROLO TO THE RESCUE

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

Platform games can be found in abundance on the Mega Drive, but with the exception of *Sonic*, you won't find a cuter, more loveable character than Rolo. Then when you find out his Mom has been kidnapped, you're pulled in and there's no way out unless you finish the game. Just as well then that it's a huge, tough platformer that will keep you entertained for ages.
MEGA says: Cute graphics and lovely sound we've had before, but there is more to this game than that. There are loadsa secret rooms, puzzles to work out using Rolo's various friends, and bosses to defeat. It's tough, but great fun.

13. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

It's quite possible that this is the most famous video game ever – it's certainly the one which, more than any other, lifted console games out of the spotty schoolboy ghetto and into the real-world limelight where they truly belong.

Yeah, it's a bit easy to finish, but why be selfish? Isn't it nice that everyone gets a chance to see the end sequence for once? Anyway, there's so much hidden away in *Sonic The Hedgehog* and it's just so much damn fun to play that you'll never get bored with it, no matter how many times you whip nasty ol' Dr Robotnik's ass. And, if you don't still get a buzz when Sonic loops the loop at maximum speed with his super-fast boots on, get someone to check your pulse – you may be dead.
MEGA says: Still the most technically stunning game the Mega Drive's ever seen, and the standard-bearer of a whole new era of video games. Completely amazing, completely brilliant.
FOR SALE: *Sonic*
£15 – 0483 892223
£15 – 0861 526285
£18/Swap – 0983 840363
£20 – 0493 722367
£20 – 081 843 1609
£15/Swap – 081 446 7949
TO SWAP: *Sonic*
0494 637769

14. RAINBOW ISLANDS

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Already hailed as the best 16-bit computer game of all time, *Rainbow Islands* has come to the Mega Drive and, miraculously, has got even better. The impossibly addictive platform action is the same as ever, the amazingly cute graphics are as sweet as ever, and the devilish, fiendishly hidden bonuses are as devilish and fiendishly hidden as ever. And with Mega Drive's *Rainbow Islands* you get a whole extra game on top! Well, it's more of a variation than a completely different game, true, but the extra, harder version extends the life of a game which was already practically immortal, and makes it just about the best value-for-money investment you'll ever see in an arcade platformer.
MEGA says: If you've got a UK Mega Drive, this game alone makes it worth buying a Jap adaptor. Seriously beautiful, incomparably playable and unbeatably addictive.

15. SWORD OF VERMILLION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99
Try not to be put off by the fearsome price tag on this one, because if you're into all that RPG hacking 'n' slashing malarkey, this'll be money well spent.

Sword Of Vermillion is probably the best game of the type on the Mega Drive and, in a market that's becoming more crowded by the day, that's no mean feat This game is big, slick and sexy.
MEGA says: Look, you're as well to spend £50 on something excellent as waste £35 on something average, aren't you? Quality costs (and in this case it certainly does), but it's usually worth it.

16. PHANTASY STAR 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99
A completely huge RPG, with loads of different worlds and a whole gang of characters to control. Try to complete *this* one in a night without using the battery back-up...
MEGA says: It's a lot of money, but in terms of hours of fun per pound, you'll be hard pushed to beat this one.
FOR SALE: *Phantasy Star 3*
£25 – 0483 892223
WANTED: *Phantasy Star 3*
£25 – 0782 313177

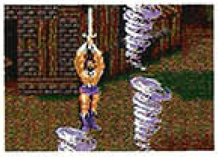
17. AERO BLASTERS

Publisher: Kemco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
If you're one of the not-very-many people who've played this brilliant game in the arcades (under the name of *Air Busters* more likely than not), you won't need telling what a fantastic, all-action, exciting and varied blastathon it is. If you aren't one of *those people*, then be told right now – *Aero Blasters* is the fastest, meanest, sexiest, joypad-grippingliest, sweatiest shoot-'em-up there's ever been.

It is more impressive-looking than most Mega Drive zappers, more innovatively designed, better off in the end-of-level boss department, and it has frighteningly fast and dangerous tunnel sections, which provide the biggest wide-eyed thrills you'll ever get from your console.
MEGA says: One of the best Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups ever without the tiniest shadow of a doubt. Your game collection shouldn't be without it.

18. GOLDEN AXE 2 (INC. GOLDEN AXE)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



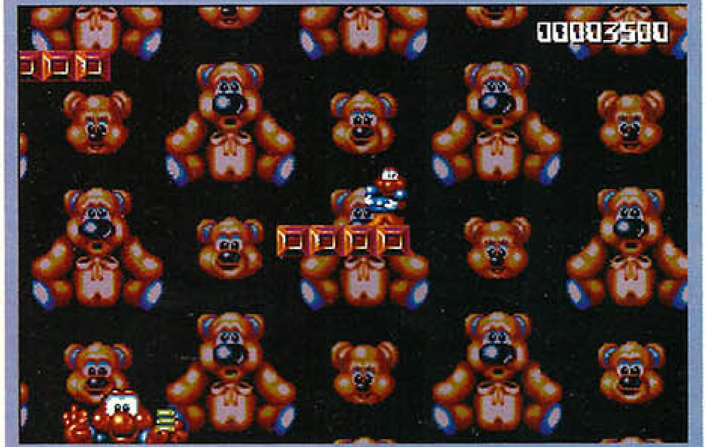
What's that? You want some beat-'em-ups? OK, here's a real golden oldie. If you're one of those strange people who likes nothing better than to wander in straight lines through strange lands kicking lumps out of the previously-happy inhabitants, then you'll probably like *Golden Axe*.

The sequel did nothing to alter the linear gameplay (Ax, Gillius or Tyris still start heading right and just keep going) and the two games are to all intents and purposes identical. It's still a simple walk-along-and-hit-fire-a-lot-whenever-you-meet-anyone

JAMES POND 2: ROBOCOD

NUMBER 25

If the evil Dr Maybe gets his way, Christmas will be gone forever. We can't have that now, can we? Go for it James...

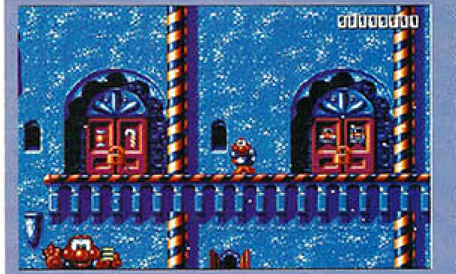


OK, so there's not a lot happening here, but you can see what I mean about the comic-style wallpaper. Certainly didn't buy that from Fads

James Pond is one strange guy. In his first adventure he spent most of his time underwater (as indeed do most fish), but for his second Mega Drive quest he's developed the ability to breathe and he can stretch his body upwards to very great heights (it could be said that he's the fishy alternative to an Aston Martin sports car).

James Pond 2 is a big game. There are 80 levels ranging from small trips to great journeys (well they're not that big, but you catch my drift, don't you?). To complete each level James must rescue all the penguins, which are hidden somewhere on the level, from their perilous circumstances, and then find the exit. The whole idea of the game is to work your way through the rooms of Dr Maybe's house, reach the evil doctor at the end and then attempt to defeat him.

It's not, however, going to be easy, because some of the levels are full to the brim with nasties, while other levels are real head scratchers. There are also secret rooms and pathways to find, some of which aren't essential to your quest, but others which most definitely are. Without the support of a password system or battery back-up this one will take a while to finish, but it's not impossible.



Outside Dr Maybe's house – enter all the doors, collect the penguins, and face the evil Doc

The graphics and sound on *Robocod* (as most people call it) are great and the comic slant (check out the psychedelic wallpaper in some of the rooms) makes the game that much more enjoyable to play. It also looks as if the game was actually gametested for quite a long tim, because as a whole it's all very well polished and fun to play. The difficulty curve is spot on too.

The only problem with *Robocod* is the samey gameplay. Most of the 80 levels are straight left to right platform levels which just involve jumping on a few platforms, stretching up to other ones and then rescuing the penguins. Unless you're a dedicated fish fan, you will more than likely tire of this game very quickly.

This is a definite improvement over the first *James Pond*, however, and the third in the series (currently called *Operation Starfish*) should be even better. As platform games go at the moment, however, there aren't many better than this, and even if you buy it today, it will definitely be money well spent. Make sure you've got a few spare weeks though, because this will take some serious time to get through.

PUBLISHER: EA

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: December '91

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549 442

MEGA SAYS: Attractive, easy-to-play and fairly large game, but each level is a bit too similar to the last for *James Pond 2: Robocod* to be in the true classic category.

80%

Turn over

kind of affair, but the execution is lovely with impressively muscular sprites and some great attacking moves. The five big levels will keep you entertained for quite a while and, while it's all very repetitive, the scenery is pretty enough to make you want to keep at it until you see the end.
MEGA says: The best game in a very limited genre, but why are beat-'em-ups always so easy to complete? Who knows?
FOR SALE: *Golden Axe*
(Jap) £20 – 0559 362265
(Jap) £20 – 0744 34736
£15 – 0768 899773
£20 – 081 843 1609
£14 – 0989 765516
£18 – 0494 715835
TO SWAP: *Golden Axe*
0580 712005
0388 663192
FOR SALE: *Golden Axe 2*
£20/Swap – 0983 840363
£20 – 0952 613477

19. DESERT STRIKE

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

Yes, OK, so it's in extremely poor taste, but you can't deny that *Desert Strike* is one of the most excellent pieces of blasting fun that the Mega Drive's ever played host to. Sometimes it can feel like you're fighting the entire war yourself, what with missions to complete, hundreds of enemies to blast and all manner of stuff to rescue with your helicopter's all-purpose winch. But even if you're not the xenophobic type, you'll be hard pushed not to have a great time with this atmospheric and action-packed shoot-'em-up.
MEGA says: Never mind the plotline, go out and get yourself enlisted today. *Desert Strike* is a great game, and that's what matters.
TO SWAP: *Desert Strike*
0204 592758

20. THUNDERFORCE 4

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The sequel to the sequel of the conversion of the coin-op looks prettier than ever before, but gameplay wise it offers nothing more than *Thunderforce 3*. If anything, the groovy graphics (and they really are rather groovy, er, "dadio") get in the way of the action – there's too much going on on-screen at any one time.
MEGA says: Looks great, lots to blast through, looks great, solid shoot-'em-up action, looks great and er, nothing *really* that could be described as special. It really does look great though.
WANTED: *Thunderforce 4*
0768 899773
(Eng) – 0562 69805

21. WORLD OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

This game is way too easy in one-player mode, but for its brilliant two-player game it earns this position. It's hard, interactive fun. Gorgeous graphics and amazing animation add to the game, and it makes *Castle of Illusion* look old hat.
MEGA says: Don't think about buying this unless you've got a mate to play it with.

22. STREETS OF RAGE

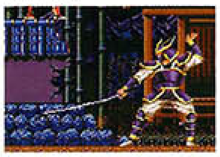
Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

If every third Mega Drive game that gets released is a beat-'em-up, how come hardly any of them are any good? Thankfully, that's a question that *Streets Of Rage* doesn't have to answer, because it's great stuff – if it were only tougher to beat!

Lovely backdrops, loads of athletic fighting moves, excellent two-player action (two players can interact with each other to pull off some frightening moves) and an imaginative approach to special weapons (the police car firing rockets from half-a-dozen screens back and still managing to pick off the bad guys with pinpoint accuracy is brilliant!) all go together to make this the most challenging and rewarding game the Mega Drive has to offer in the genre.
MEGA says: If you want a beat-'em-up, there is no alternative (well, except *Golden Axe 2*).
FOR SALE: *Streets of Rage*
£18 – 0559 362265
£20 – 0952 613477
TO SWAP: *Streets of Rage*
0388 663192

23. REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Revenge Of Shinobi, the excellent follow-up to the popular arcade beat-'em-up, looks great and sounds excellent, and although you've seen the format a hundred times before, this one's so well done that you can forgive it any lack of originality.
MEGA says: Super stuff, with top special effects and just plain special gameplay (if you can be "plain special", that is).
FOR SALE: *Revenge of Shinobi*
£20 – 0768 899773
£20 – 0925 413 978

24. TAZ-MANIA

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

The most cartoon-like Sega game so far, *Taz-Mania* stars that lovable psychopath, the Tazmanian Devil, in a *Sonic*-like game of epic (in everything but game size) proportions. It's beautiful, it's hilarious, but it's also a bit repetitive and none too tough to get to the end of. If you've got a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister, though (or if you *are* a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister), this is absolutely ideal.
MEGA says: Brilliantly entertaining, but not all that demanding, *Taz-Mania* is perfect for the kids, and for those of you who can afford to spend lots of dosh on games which you'll finish in three days.
FOR SALE: *Taz-Mania*
£25 – 0691 623751
£20 – 0559 362265
£22 – 0672 62457
TO SWAP: *Taz-Mania*
For *EA Hockey* – 021 449 5436

25. JAMES POND 2 – ROBOCOD

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

Converted from, but significantly improved upon, the 16-bit computer classic, *Robocod* was the game that took on Sonic at his own game and didn't make a half-bad stab at it. Exceptionally pretty, this is one of the best hedgehog clones you can buy.
MEGA says: Great little game, with a different feel to most platformers (largely thanks to your extendible character...). A good laugh.
FOR SALE: *James Pond 2*
£25/Swap – 0850 724500
£20 – 0559 362265
£20 – 0672 62457
£20 – 0768 899773
£22 – 0983 840363
TO SWAP: *James Pond 2*
0204 592758
0388 663192

26. SIDE POCKET

Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

A novel coin-op conversion with bells on. You can try to beat the one-player game, play a mate, or show off your skills in the trick game. Smart graphics, great sound and fun gameplay go to make a strange, but welcome, breath of fresh air.
MEGA says: We all luv a game of pool, and this beats paying 30p a go down the pub nearly every time.

27. POWERMONGER

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

Strategy is the name of the game, and if you're looking for some serious head-scratching, then *PowerMonger* could be for you. If, on top of all that, you like a bit of domination, then this game could well be the best game you ever buy.
MEGA says: Very, very in-depth and tough. You're going to burst a few brain cells before you finish this one.

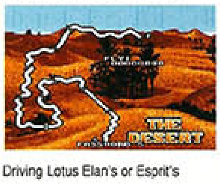
28. HUMANS

Publisher: Imagitec
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

If you're going to bring out a puzzle game, then you've got to make sure it's a bit different from the rest of the genre to guarantee success. *Humans* is much like *Lemmings*, but it has enough differences to make it worth a look. If you've tried *Lemmings* and you've either finished it or got bored, *Humans* should fill that missing puzzle gap in your life.
MEGA says: Initially a bit complex, but give it a few goes before you condemn it. Try before you buy.

29. LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA



Driving Lotus Elan's or Esprit's across various terrains might not sound like fun, but with great graphics, fab sound and a two-player head-to-head game, this one is definitely worth buying.
MEGA says: It beats games like *Out Run* and *Turbo Out Run* hands down. If racing is your thing, buy this.

30. TERMINATOR 2

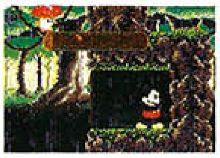
Publisher: Arena
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

The first *Operation Wolf*-type game that's appeared on the Mega Drive, *and* it's even better for the fact that it's compatible with the Menacer light gun. It also plays well with a joypad.

It's a decent shoot-'em-up, and loads of images from the film make it all the more fun to watch.
MEGA says: A decent shoot-'em-up and a tough one too. It's got great graphics, superb sound and also some really nice gameplay.

31. CASTLE OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



Mickey Mouse, eh? Don't you just love him? No matter what he does, no matter where he goes, his little mousey ears always stay perfectly round. Yep, even when he appears in really lovely platform adventures like this one, with all manner of strange and beautiful Disney-style fantasy creatures trying to off him in a deeply unfriendly manner as he tries to rescue his sweet mouse babe from the excellently-named witch Mizrabel. What a trouper he is.
MEGA says: A lovely platform epic very much in the style of (whisper it) *Mario*, except without all that tedious head-butting palaver. Gorgeous to look at and gorgeous to play. The whole family will love this one.
FOR SALE: *Castle Of Illusion*
Sell £20/Swap – 0559 362265
£20 – 0952 613477
TO SWAP: *Castle of Illusion*
(Jap) – 0204 592758

32. LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The Mega Drive's first chopper-'em-up and only the second genuine flight sim. The graphics are supremely detailed and suffer from only a slight jerkiness while the action remains fast and furious.
MEGA says: Anyone who's ever seen *Apocalypse Now* or *Wings Of The Apache* will relish this chance to spray heat-seeking death at anything that moves. And anyone who fancies "having a go" at developing their own military tactics and completing a whole Eastenders (long drawn-out series) of missions will find plenty to get their teeth stuck in to.

33. DECAP ATTACK

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Decap Attack (originally released as *Magical Hat Turbo Adventure*) may at first glance make you go "yuck". But if you persist past the first 20 seconds, you'll suddenly discover that you're having a brilliant time, thanks to the rollicking platform escapades that make up this wonderfully tasteless game.

Controlling a character who can chuck his proper head (his name's Chuck D Head, good eh?) and who has an extra, telescopic, head in his ribcage is simply great fun, and the cheesy music complements the gameplay perfectly.
MEGA says: Ropeyish graphics, but don't let that put you off this gorgeous and funny platformer.
FOR SALE: *Decap Attack*
£15 – 081 319 1068
(Jap) £20 – 0768 899773
TO SWAP: *Decap Attack*
(Jap) – 0768 899773

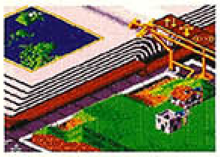
34. GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

A frighteningly tough coin-op conversion, but hey, it's not as if you have to shovel money into the thing, so who cares? You certainly won't be seeing the end of this one during the same day you buy it, and that's even with infinite continues. The graphics and sound are practically flawless, as brave Sir Arthur scuttles his swathe through legions of platform-placed zombies, monsters and vultures. *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is simply one of the best arcade games around.
MEGA says: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is the business – and, for once, the tough difficulty tuning guarantees decent value for money as well as being great short-term arcade fun.
FOR SALE: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*
£20 – 081 390 2751
£25 – 0768 899773

35. POPULOUS

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



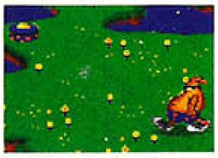
Immensely strange and original God-simulator game in which you hold sway over the very shape of the land itself, as you try to create an army of followers to defeat an opposing deity. Slightly forbidding at first with a mass of controls to get the hang of, but once you're in, you'll probably never want to come back out.

MEGA says: One of the most compulsive games ever invented. There's nothing else like it on the MD so, egomaniacs everywhere, don't miss it.

FOR SALE: *Populous*
£15 – 071 435 3428
WANTED: *Populous*
£20 – 0782 313177
TO SWAP: *Populous*
0580 712005

36. TOE JAM AND EARL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



Multi-player action doesn't get a lot more entertaining than this. Toejam (urgh) and Earl are two of the grooviest aliens you could ask to have a close encounter with, which is part of the reason why it's such a pleasure to help them out on their quest to rebuild their crashed spaceship. The rest of the reason, though, is the superbly manic and zany action which takes place as our two heroes career around the screen, causing havoc wherever they go. After a few plays, the lower levels tend to drag a bit (there's no password option), but this game is both original and insane.

MEGA says: Another OK game, which becomes completely essential when played with someone else. Got any friends? Buy this. Haven't got any friends? Then buy this and make some.

37. SPEEDBALL 2

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

This game is Mega Drive violence at its most extreme. Nominally a future sports sim, *Speedball 2* is actually football meets rollerball meets bare-knuckle boxing in a frantic and immensely brutal festival of blood and guts. There's also plenty of room for skill and strategy, which means that for an all-round sporting experience *Speedball 2* is hard to beat – especially in two-player mode.

MEGA says: Very much an arcade sports game (rather than the more tactical approach favoured by, say, *John Madden Football*), this is about as good as arcade sports games get. *Speedball 2* is totally vicious and totally excellent.

38. PIT FIGHTER

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £37.99

Ooh look, it's another beat-'em-up. Ah yes, but wait... this one's different. How come? Well, it's got digitised graphics, guv. That means the fighters you take on in this simulation of that ugliest of "sports" (pit fighting, that is) look incredibly realistic, which means you can imagine that it's a real human being you're knocking the living daylights out of. You sad person.

MEGA says: Pretty dull and morally dubious beat-'em-up fare. You won't find much prettier BEUs, but gameplay-wise you could do a lot better than this.

39. SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A mammoth, gorgeous RPG (as opposed to a gorgeous mammoth RPG, which would be a completely different proposition involving attractive elephants, wouldn't it?) with lovely aesthetics and gameplay which will keep you entranced for months. *Shining In The Darkness* is probably the Mega Drive's most accessible RPG, so comes highly recommended to anyone who fancies giving the genre a try.

MEGA says: A bit of a must for RPG fans, but even if you're not into the genre, give this a try. You might find that you're pleasantly surprised.

FOR SALE: *Shining in the Darkness*
£20 – 0952 613477

40. PHANTASY STAR 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £59.99

Not quite as big and sexy as *Phantasy Star 3*, obviously, but pretty impressive all the same.

MEGA says: Great stuff, but at this price it's strictly for absolute fanatics of the genre

41. F-22 INTERCEPTOR

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

There aren't many flight simulators around on the Mega Drive, which, to be honest, is most of the reason why this is the best one. The graphics are fabulous, but the gameplay gets repetitive a bit too quickly for MEGA's liking.

MEGA says: If you want a flight sim, this is about as good as they currently get. Luckily Microprose have some fantastic up, down, flying around, looping-the-loop-type stuff in the pipeline. We'll keep you posted, so keep an eye out.

TO SWAP: *F-22 Interceptor*
Swap/Sell £20 – 081 572 9439

42. STRIDER

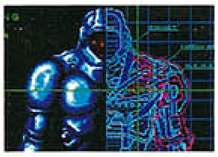
Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

Amazing graphics, superb sound, lovely animation and some of the biggest and baddest enemies you'll ever meet, are the ingredients of *Strider*. Pretty simplistic platform-leaping beat-'em-up is the order of the day here, but *Strider* does it better than most, and it does it looking better than almost anything. Oh yeah, and the "running down the side of a mountain" sequence is just about worth the cost of the cart all by itself.

MEGA says: You'll finish it in two days, but if you want something which will show your friends the power of the Mega Drive, this is the game (second to only *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*) that'll make them go "gosh, wow" the most.

43. ESWAT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



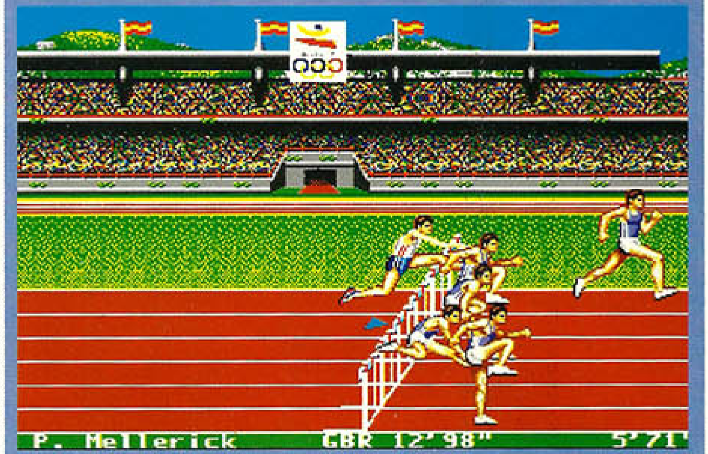
Bearing only the slightest resemblance to the coin-op of the same name, *ESWAT* luckily manages to be an even better game than its arcade counterpart. It's got a bit more to it than the coin-op's limited beat-'em-up formula, and although it's still no *Sword Of Vermillion*, there's just about enough thinking to keep you interested to the very end.

MEGA says: There are literally dozens of this type of game around, but this is one of the relatively few which are actually worth having. Pretty simplistic, but still involving and addictive.

OLYMPIC GOLD

NUMBER 58

Bash those buttons and break those world records. The Barcelona Olympics may well be over, but you can still sweat it out over the 100 metres



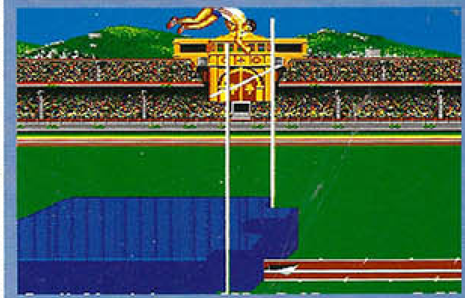
Oh, you'd better watch yourself over those hurdles; many a prospective father has come a cropper on those. Ouch!

The tension is high. You've made it through the qualifying heats and you're here in the final. You've limbered up, you're loose, and you ready for the most important ten seconds of your life. And no, your name isn't Linford Christie.

Yes, this is a game which finally brings you all the tension and excitement of the Olympic Games, and you don't have to travel to Barcelona to take part. OK, so that's a little over the top, but *Olympic Gold* is still a cracking good sports game and the only one of its kind on the Mega Drive.

The gameplay is not outstanding by any means; all you have to do is bash those buttons as fast as possible and take the odd jump. Played with a few friends, however, this game can become a lot of fun.

The whole idea here is to win points and prove yourself as the best all round athlete. You're competing against either human or computer opponents and you get more points (as well as medals) the higher the position in which you finish. There are seven events (100 metres, hammer, archery, 110 metres hurdles, pole vault, diving and swimming) in all, and each event has its own individual control system. Although initially this is all a bit complex, it doesn't take too long to figure out, and get used to, the different systems.



Whhhhhhhhhhhooooooooooooooooo! Arrrggggggghhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!!

Graphically the game is very nice. The players (especially the runners) are smoothly animated and the rest of the graphics accompany the game very nicely. But in a game like this the gameplay is where it's at. Unfortunately, it's a bit too easy, and after a bit of practice (and several sore fingers) you won't find winning gold on Olympic level much of a problem at all. Probably the most difficult challenge is the archery – you'll have to be Robin Hood to get a world record in this one.

Olympic Gold is one of those games that really comes to life when you've got a few mates round, a few beers close at hand, and a few hours to spare. Other sports games may offer more realism, but *Olympic Gold* tends to be a lot more fun. It's definitely worth a look and you've always got the challenge of bettering your old scores.

PUBLISHER: US Gold

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: June '92

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: US Gold 021 356 3388

MEGA SAYS: You can get bored of the samey gameplay very quickly, but the game always maintains enough fun value for you to come back for more. Good, but not that good. 71%

Turn over

TOP 100

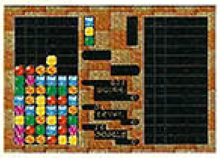
44. SHADOW DANCER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

ESWAT with a dog, basically.
MEGA says: More fab scrolling beat-'em-up action, and you'll find yourself getting really attached to your little ninja pooch, too. The baddies are truly bad and the ninja scum that Joe's fighting against put up a decent enough fight. There are plenty of secret bonuses and hidden goodies to keep the interest factor up. Well worth a bang – check it out.

45. COLUMNS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



The game they give away with the Game Gear, and it's easy to see why – it's worth buying one of the fabby little machines just to play this, except, of course, you don't have to. This brilliant cross between *Tetris* and *Klax* is better on the Mega Drive than anywhere else, thanks mainly to the fact that the graphics are big enough to let you actually see what's going on. great stuff solo, but the two-player head-to-head "flash" game is totally wonderful. The best Mega Drive puzzle game going.
MEGA says: Buy another joypad, buy *Columns*, and then invite some of your friends round. Then see if you can get them to leave...
FOR SALE: *Columns*
£23 – 0923 213661

46. KID CHAMELEON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Ultra-cute platform thang with lots of really neat touches, but it's too easy and not all that exciting. Sega hyped this game almost as much as they did Sonic *The Hedgehog*, so they must have been more than a bit disappointed with its lack-lustre performance sales-wise. The game isn't at all bad, and remember – you don't have to be great to be good.
MEGA says: If large platform games are your thing, then this might be one of the best you ever buy.
TO SWAP: *Kid Chameleon*
0282 775527
0204 592758
FOR SALE: *Kid Chameleon*
£25 – 0768 899773

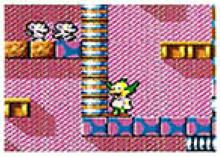
47. JOE MONTANA 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

The only serious (ha) threat to the *John Madden* crown comes back for a third time. It's got several things *John Madden '93* hasn't, notably a league, three different viewpoints and a zoom in mode. However, it's not as playable or friendly to use. This is one for the serious American football fan.
MEGA says: Sega try again, but they fall just short. It's worth checking out if American football is your thang.

48. KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

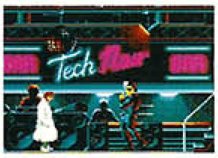
Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



The Simpsons always threatened to invade the world of Mega Drive games, but they arrived about six months too late to cash in on the height of the hype. Luckily for Krusty, his game is good enough to make a good impression in its own right. There's lots of puzzles, lots of cartoony graphics and lots of fun to be had by all.
MEGA says: *Krusty's Super Fun House* is one of a rare breed of game: a licensed title that manages to combine a big name with a decent game. Good rat-splatting stuff.

49. TERMINATOR

Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99



You're really enjoying yourself, you're marvelling at the lush graphics, you're being blown away by the non-stop all-action platform shoot-'em-up gameplay, you're blasting through the fourth level and... er, then you finish it. That's it then, eh?
MEGA says: Lovely game, but there's not nearly enough of it.

50. TWO CRUDE DUDES

Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Well, it's a beat-'em-up and it's got some crude dudes in it. Er...
MEGA says: A fairly accurate version of the coin-op *Crude Busters* and it's OK. The whole game looks good and plays OK but it's just too easy to finish. Same old story...
TO SWAP: *Two Crude Dudes*
Swap/Sell £25 – 0782 313177
(Jap) Swap plus £4 – 0768 899773
FOR SALE: *Two Crude Dudes*
(Jap) £20 – 0768 899773

51. AFTERBURNER 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

The arcade version of *Afterburner* (all style and no content) threw the player and his lunch all around a hydraulic cockpit while simultaneously flinging huge graphics at the screen so fast that all you could do was wrench the joystick around wildly, keep your finger locked on the trigger and hope desperately for the best.

Mega Drive *Afterburner* recreates the feel of the coin-op perfectly, except that you'll have to get someone to come round and jiggle your chair for you while you play. What else is there to say?
MEGA says: Er, this, I suppose. *Afterburner 2* (ie *Afterburner*) is excellent short-term blasting, but it's thinner than gold plating on a window, and there are plenty of other shoot-'em-ups that'll give you bigger thrills. Try *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* for starters.
FOR SALE: *Afterburner 2*
£18 – 0562 69805
£20 – 0768 899773

52. THUNDERFORCE 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £35.99

Of course, with the arrival of *Thunderforce 4*, it might seem a bit ludicrous to rush out and buy this now. But if you don't, you'll be missing out on some of the best blasting mayhem this side of, er, anywhere. But not only that. You'll also be missing out on the chance to make your mates go "Woo!" at some of the best visual effects yet seen on the Mega Drive. It's not all cosmetics though – *Thunderforce 3* is also a damn fine shoot-'em-up in its own right with great weapons, loadsa power-ups and loadsa baddies. If you're a zapping fan, this is another one of those "must-haves", basically.
MEGA says: An incredibly slick and gorgeous blaster which is perhaps slightly better to look at than play, but that's probably because it's so bloody wonderful to look at. You shoot-'em-up fanatics will love some more of the same, but those new to the genre had better check out *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* first.

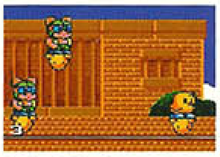
53. BUCK ROGERS "COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY"

Publisher: EA
Price: £49.99

Not one of the most spectacular games you'll ever see, but the game's got tons of depth. Searching around this futuristic strategic role playing game thing will keep you interested for a while, but MEGA wants to know why they left out the old Twiki the robot?
MEGA says: Very nice, but wouldn't it have been better to use the licence for a good old-fashioned shoot-'em-up? MEGA thinks so.
FOR SALE: *Buck Rogers*
£23/Swap – 051 427 0097

54. NEW ZEALAND STORY

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



Another classic coin-op that's seen incarnations on just about every format imaginable, but the Mega Drive version takes an unexpected twist by being less of a conversion than a rearrangement of the original. All the same features found in the arcade game are present and correct, but the level layouts and structures are almost completely different. While this is a bit of a bummer for arcade perfectionists, it means that *New Zealand Story* fans now have a whole new game to play, and that can't be a bad thing now, can it?
MEGA says: *New Zealand Story* on the Mega Drive is as cute, clever and addictive as it ever was, so who cares if all the bits are in different places? Not us, that's for sure.

55. TEAM USA BASKETBALL

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

This is the best Mega Drive basketball game so far. Excellent two-player action and wacky signature moves make this the essential purchase for all basketball fans.
MEGA says: Shame its: a) just a tad too easy; and b) not quite up to the usual EASN standard. But apart from these two quibbles, it's lovely.

56. TRUXTON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99
Shoot-'em-up, huh? Vertical scrolling, huh? Bit easy to beat, isn't it?
MEGA says: Well yes, but on the whole, *Truxton* is a decent enough effort. It's good fun to pick up and play every now and again, but it'll never change your life, or even give you one especially wonderful evening. Mmm, sorry.

57. DRAGON'S FURY

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

It's a pinball game.
MEGA says: And it's lovely.
FOR SALE: *Dragon's Fury*
£23 – 0923 213661
TO SWAP: *Dragon's Fury*
0837 54763
(Jap) Swap plus £4 – 0768 899773
WANTED: *Dragon's Fury*
£25 – 0782 313177

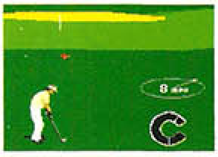
58. OLYMPIC GOLD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99

The graphics may be lush, but at the root of it all, it's just a creative way to pummel the living daylights out of your joypad.
MEGA says: Pretty dull by yourself, but excellent fun when you've got a few mates round.
FOR SALE: *Olympic Gold*
£23 – 0923 213661
£20 – 0302 711653

59. WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £37.99



Well, it's pretty good, but it's not really *PGA Tour*, now is it?
MEGA says: No it isn't. Unless you're absolutely golf loopy nuts and just *have* to have every available sim, get *PGA* and settle for that.

60. BATTLE SQUADRON

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
It's Amiga conversion time again, but this vertically-scrolling blaster looked pretty dated even when it originally appeared about two years ago, and it hasn't really improved with age. Good solid zapping action, but nothing to that's gonna hold your attention for very long.
MEGA says: Bog-standard vertical zaperama with little or nothing to make it stand out from the crowd.

61. AQUATIC GAMES

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

THE
AQUATIC
GAMES

James Pond is back. This time, however, he's taking part (with his friends) in the Aquatic Games. Work out the best tactic for each event and get those gold medals. Lovely graphics and some taxing events make this a fun game, especially for those younger Mega Drive owners.
MEGA says: It's button bashing alright, but not as we know it.
FOR SALE: *Aquatic Games*
£23 – 081 319 1068
Sell/Swap 0273 506790

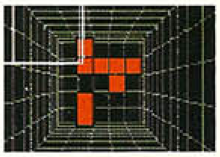
62. BIO-HAZARD BATTLE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

Sexy graphics and spooky sound don't make a game, but they do go a long way. Thankfully *Bio-Hazard Battle* has some exciting shooting action to go with it. It's not the most original idea going, but it has a two-player option. We like it.
MEGA says: There's nothing new in here, but it's very playable.

63. BLOCKOUT

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99



Your brain will never forgive you. Imagine *Tetris*, played looking down a well, with three-dimensional vector-graphic wire-frame blocks which can be moved, turned and rotated in each of the three axes. Having problems imagining it? Just you try playing it, mate.
MEGA says: Complete mind torture, but if you're a professional mathematician or more laid back than a particularly relaxed sloth, you'll get some serious puzzling fun out of this one.
FOR SALE: *Blockout*
£23 – 0923 213661

64. F1 CIRCUS

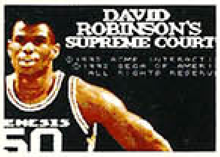
Publisher: Nichibutsu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

This game is second only to the *Super Monaco GP* twins, *F1 Circus* looks ropey but plays well. The Formula One tie-in is well implemented and playing the game makes a fairly realistic representation of putting you in the cockpit of the real thing. In other words, you'll crash a lot.

MEGA says: If realism gets your motor running (even if it's at the expense of lush graphics), then check this out.

65. DAVID ROBINSON BASKETBALL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



The best of a whole clutch of basketball games recently released by various people. Though still not up to *Team USA Basketball* this one boasts by far the smoothest, fastest action, and some of the nicest effects too. If basketball's your bag (ahem), this is your kind of shopping trolley. (What? – Ed.)

MEGA says: Bouncy bouncy, bouncy bouncy, fun, fun, fun, fun, fun. (What? – Ed.) Tiggers. And basketballs. (Ah – Ed.)

FOR SALE: *David Robinson Basketball*
(Jap) £20 – 0559 362265

66. SUPER HANG-ON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99

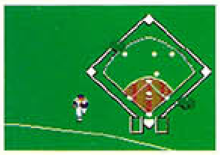
Road Rash, without all the violence. Yes, we know it sounds like a bit of a bad idea, but if what you're after is pure high-speed racing thrills, then this is still your best bet. A near-perfect rendition of the coin-op, too – just try to stop yourself from leaning into those bends...

MEGA says: It looks lovely, it plays beautifully, it'll last for ever. Along with *Super Monaco* and *Road Rash*, the only genuinely essential racing game for your Mega Drive.

FOR SALE: *Super Hang-On*
£15 – 0483 892223
(Jap) £15 – 0768 899773

67. SPORTS TALK BASEBALL

Publisher: Sega USA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



A decent baseball game, that tells you what's going on as it happens.

MEGA says: As with *Joe Montana Football 2*, great for people with no friends.

68. DODGEBALL

Publisher: Sega Japan (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

Volleyball meets *Speedball* in this strange, but entertaining Japanese game. The idea is to knock your opponent's team members out of the court with a high-speed chuck of a medicine ball. Decidedly strange, inevitably violent and great fun – almost like sellotaping a vulture to your friend's anorak.

MEGA says: Not sure about this vulture/anorak business, but *Dodgeball* remains a good two-(or more) player game.

69. ARCUS ODYSSEY

Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

A lovely looking 3D game, which scores points for offering some of the best simultaneous two-player action that's going.

MEGA says: This is OK by us.

70. INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

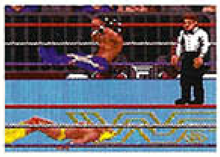
UNN & DUFFY CIRCU

One of the greatest adventurers of all time (and he's fictional too) appears on the Mega Drive. The graphics are nice and the film tie-in is handled very effectively. However, owing to some little gameplay glitches the game ends up being very tough and furthermore very frustrating.

MEGA says: Take a careful look at this before you buy – it's not everybody's cup of tea.

71. WWF SUPER WRESTLE MANIA

Publisher: Flying Edge (IMPORT)
Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

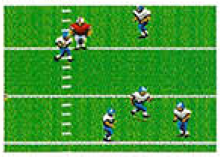


Big, beefy, and as tough as nails. If you fancy getting your hands on a few American wrestlers and giving them the suplex treatment, then this might be the game for you. It's not the most original game in the world and it won't last you that long either.

MEGA says: The two-player head-to-head is quite good fun, but the one-player game lacks sufficient excitement.

72. JOE MONTANA 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Even this sequel to the original 'not too bad but let's face it, it's not as good as *John Madden*' American football game fails to lace the boots or plump the padding of the boy from Electronic Arts. Nice try but no cigar.

MEGA says: It's not as good as *John Madden Football* but it talks to you. Perfect for gridiron fanatics with no friends.

73. FIGHTING MASTERS

Publisher: Treco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Solid two-player beat-'em-up action is the name of this lovely looking game. If only the beast was a bit more substantial in one-player mode.

MEGA says: Two-player pommelling can be a great laugh (especially with 12 intergalactic hard cases to play with), but don't bother with *Fighting Masters* if you're a solo scrapper.

74. CHUCK ROCK

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99

This is an old Amiga game which has been brushed up a bit for the Mega Drive and, as you might expect, it's a bit of a lush looker. What you might not expect is a fabby prehistoric platform game which plays like an episode of The Flintstones (except it's funnier) and in which you dispose of your enemies by bouncing them off your gigantic beer belly. Nope, you might not expect that, but it's what you'll get anyway. Ha.

MEGA says: This is a really enjoyable platformer, packed to the brim with variety, lovely little touches and more imagination than a dozen lesser efforts in this genre.

75. TETRIS

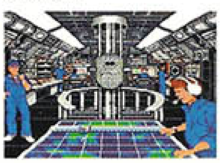
Publisher: (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

OK, hands up everyone who doesn't know about *Tetris*. Three of you, eh? Well, where have you been for the last couple of years? On Mars?

MEGA says: The biggest and sexiest puzzle game of all eternity comes to the Mega Drive. If, by some incredibly unlikely fluke, you don't already have a *Tetris* game, then get this one now. Either that or you'll have to buy a Game Boy.

76. 688 ATTACK SUB

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

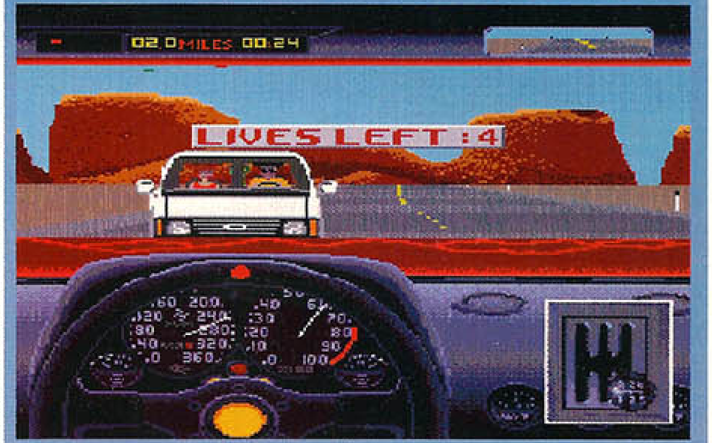


Nice, atmospheric submarine

TEST DRIVE 2

NUMBER 81

Shift that stick into fifth and reach those speeds that you only ever previously dreamt about. Sounds good, but is it really *that* good?



Oi, what are you doing driving down this side of the road? Er, yes, I forgot we were in America. Suppose you want my insurance details

If you're going to make a racing game, then you've really got to come up with something new, different and playable as well. To break the mould of normal racing games, *Test Drive 2* puts you behind the wheel of one of three real makes of car, on real roads and against real traffic. Sounds pretty hot stuff so far, doesn't it?

You view the oncoming course as if you were sitting in the driver's seat (called first-person perspective) and you're also driving in America, so make sure you're on the right (right) side of the road. To prove yourself as a road warrior you've got to race your choice of car (either a Porsche 911, Lamborghini Diablo or a Ferrari F40) through six levels of scenery. Each level is longer and tougher than the previous one and you're also racing against a computer car.

GAS
GAS
and Juggling supplies

Excuse me guv. Can I have ten gallons of unleaded? And hurry up about it please

You've got to avoid the oncoming cars, the Police and, indeed, the scenery. Watch out in the mountain areas, because if you make one wrong move, you could easily fall off the edge into certain oblivion.

Make it through the course and then pull into the gas station to fill up, to see how you've done, and then carry on with the rest of the game. You've got five lives in which to see how far you can get through the game and see how many points you can accumulate.

Now, while most of this sounds good, there are a few problems. Graphically the game is very odd; it's all done in some kind of 3D effect, but everything is so badly defined that it's not easy to see exactly what's going on. It's also difficult judging your position on the road. One minute you can be happily driving down the road when an oncoming car will hit you because you are, in fact, slightly over the middle line.

The type of car you choose to drive is pretty insignificant too, as there's very little difference between their strengths. With only a couple of seconds between them in the 0-60 times and only a few mph difference in top speed, you really can just choose the car which you think's the coolest.

Test Drive 2 is billed as more of a driving simulation than an entertaining sports game, but it doesn't really look like one or the other. Racing fans might enjoy the new angle and realism of this driving game, but for the majority of Mega Drive gamers *Test Drive 2* is not about to set the world alight.

PUBLISHER: Accolade

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE: June '92

CARTRIDGE: 8Mbit

CONTACT: Accolade

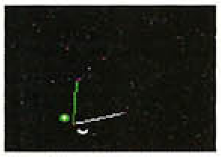
MEGA SAYS: A strange game because it tries to be an arcade game and a simulation all in one. It falls somewhere between the two and ends up being a very odd driving game. 65%

Turn over

simulator with a bit of zapping and some pleasant aesthetics.
MEGA says: PING!... Not the kind of thing you ever PING!... imagine anybody buying a Mega PING!... Drive for, but good at what it does.
FOR SALE: *688 Attack Sub*
Sell/Swap – 0273 506790

77. STAR CONTROL

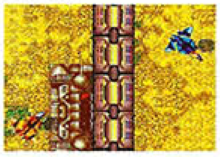
Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99



Massive but not actually all that complicated space strategy trading thing with zappy and tactical bits thrown in as a life-preserver.
MEGA says: A bit of a lark with a chum if you're after something different, but kinda dull if you're on your own.

78. HERZOG ZWEI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Eight-way scrolling, view-from-above, simultaneous two-player, head-to-head, split-screen shoot- and think-'em-up with bags of strategy. It could have been a classic, but didn't quite manage to hang together.
MEGA says: Almost excellent for two-player head-to-head. If you can pick it up cheap, you may love it.

79. SPIDERMAN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

"Spiderman, Spiderman, does whatever a spider can." So how come you never see him getting trapped in a bath then, eh?
MEGA says: Pretty run-of-the-mill platform game, lifted out of the ordinary by some pretty spiffy graphics and a nice line in enemies. This is, however, still really only for web-slinging fanatics and the Manic Street Preachers (evidently they're big fans).
TO SWAP: *Spiderman*
0386 663192

80. CORPORATION

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

Gigantic and tough 3D, RPG-ish Amiga conversion with some top 3D blasting bits in it. The idea is that you're a secret agent briefed with the unenviable job of trying to establish whether rumours of a company creating killer genetic mutants is true or not. It's involving and absorbing although it can get a bit repetitive if constantly creeping around mutant-infested buildings inches from death, isn't your idea of a good night out.
MEGA says: For role playing fun with a bit more blasting *and* a bit more brain-stretching than usual, *Corporation* is a pretty damn good purchase.

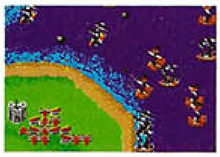
81. TEST DRIVE 2

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £34.99

A two-player, head-to-head driving game that sounds as if it should be great, but somehow never lives up to expectations.
MEGA says: Enjoyable serious-ish, two-player driving/crashing game, which you may never be able to buy. Life's a bitch, eh?

82. RAMPART

Publisher: Tengen (IMPORT)
Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA



The two-player mode in most games is a very welcome additional option. In *Rampart*, it is the only part of the game worth mentioning. Playing this puzzle arcade game against the computer is bland and repetitive. Take on a thinking human opponent, however, and the blood begins to boil.
MEGA says: If you're a popular sort of bloke, then give this a try with some of your friends.

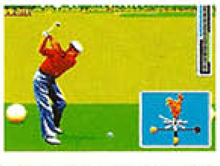
83. TROUBLE SHOOTER

Publisher: Vic Tokai (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Madison and Crystal take to the skies to kick some alien butt in an entertaining shoot-'em-up with a choice of five special weapons, some seriously whacked-out bosses and five levels of constant action.
MEGA says: A tad too small and a tad too easy, but while it lasts, *Trouble Shooter* is right good stuff.

84. ARNOLD PALMER TOURNAMENT GOLF

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



More golf? Haven't we covered that one already? Of "course" we have! (Another joke like that and you're fired. I'm not joking – Ed.)
MEGA says: *PGA Tour's* the game you want.

85. GLEY LANCER

Publisher: NCS (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 in MEGA

Another shoot-'em-up to add to the collection, but at least this one has got something different. The different firing patterns of your sister pods add a some difficulty to the proceedings
MEGA says: The weapon systems are fun and they make this shoot-'em-up stand out from the rest.

86. GAMES – THE WINTER CHALLENGE

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99

Pretty run-of-the-mill snowbound sports sim with eight ice-tastic events. As ever, lots of laughs with your buddies, but a real snoozeathon if you try it solo.
MEGA says: This one's been kind of overtaken by *Olympic Gold* as the Mega Drive's première multi-event sports game, but it's still a good example of the genre. It's just not a particularly outstanding genre, is all.
TO SWAP: *Games – The Winter Challenge*
Swap/Sell £20 – 0484 432526

87. KLAX

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £34.99

A massive coin-op cult (ie hardly anyone played it but everyone who did, loved it to bits), *Klax* is one of the best puzzle games ever. Unlike *Tetris* et al, you get a bit of scope for your own strategies instead of just needing lightning reactions, although you'll have to have those too. Very original and excellently designed, with a groovy two-player head-to-head game to boot, *Klax* will test your speed, sight, and spatial perception, all at the same time. Can you handle it?
MEGA says: *Columns*, *Tetris*, *Blockout* and *Klax* – the only puzzle games you'll ever need. Geniuses shouldn't be without any of them.

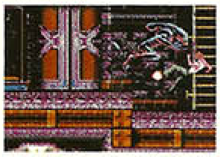
88. SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

The original *Shadow of the Beast* was very poor indeed, but thankfully the sequel is much better. Guide our hero around the lovely countryside battling against all sorts of creatures. You'll need to use your brain as well though, because there are some devilish puzzles that need to be solved.
MEGA says: It runs at a very slow pace and, therefore, may not be to everyone's liking. It is, however, certainly an improvement on the original.

89. ALIEN 3

Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £34.99



Strangely reminiscent of *Terminator*, but then when you realise that both games come from the programmers at Probe, maybe it's not such a big surprise after all. This time you're Ripley and you're faced with the task of machine-gunning, grenade-chucking and alien-blasting your way through platform after platform of action.
MEGA says: Nothing special, and certainly nothing to get excited about. Without the atmospheric effects and intro of *Terminator* the game falls into the ranks of all the other seen-it-all-before platformers.
FOR SALE: *Alien 3*
£23 – 0923 213661

90. JAMES POND

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

The prequel to *Robocod*, but a more inferior game. Some cute platform/swimming around fun, but nothing that'll really set your head on fire. Er, not that you'd especially want it to.
MEGA says: The 12 levels won't last you too long, and you'll probably get a bit bored before the end, anyway This is, however, still good fun for a few days.

91. TWINKLE TALE

Publisher: WAS (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

A fun, original and addictive shoot-'em-up, that suffers from begin too easy. The seven levels are varied and the end-of-level bosses look great, but you'll finish it within two days.
MEGA says: It's great fun, and it's a cute shoot-'em-up. It's just a damn shame the thing is so easy to complete.

92. THE IMMORTAL

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

A massive but ropey-looking RPG and with loads of blood 'n' guts definitely one for the gore-thirsty gameplayer. It's very slick but very repetitive and it's all over very quickly. Ah well!
MEGA says: It's an OK game, and some will flip over the graphics, but think very carefully before you blow £40 on this game.
FOR SALE: *The Immortal*
£25 – 0483 892223
£25 – 0493 722367
TO SWAP: *The Immortal*
021 449 5436

93. DARIUS 2

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

You wanna see something different? Then how about seeing seven different endings? Now that is a way of extending a game's lifespan. This classy, sideways-scrolling shoot-'em-up offers enough to earn it a place in the Top 100, but it doesn't quite break any new ground.
MEGA says: Nice graphics, nice sound, nice challenge – but nothing new whatsoever. An above-average sideways-scroller that's worth a look.

94. MIGHT AND MAGIC

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A drastically over-expensive game with a dated control interface and crap graphics. But this is still a deep and absorbing role playing game. You can, however, do much better for your money. Check out the *Phantasy Star* series to see exactly what I mean.
MEGA says: This one's past its prime, to be honest.
FOR SALE: *Might and Magic*
£15 – 071 435 3428

95. CALIFORNIA GAMES

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Half-pipe skateboarding, foot-bag, roller-skating, surfing and BMXing: those Californians sure know how to have a great time, don't they? This game is a lot of fun to get into, but there's no real long-term appeal.
MEGA says: Put the £40 in a bank account for about fifty years at 12% interest, then go to the USA yourself.

96. BUDOKAN

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

Martial arts-type beat-'em-up, which requires a little more thought than most. This game involves a lot of wiggling the joypad, hitting the buttons and hoping for the best.
MEGA says: If beating computer people up (in four different "sporting" events), is where you get your thrills, this is one of the less brain-rotting ways in which you can go about it.
FOR SALE: *Budokan*
£22 – 0744 34736

97. ZERO WING

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Of all the millions of horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-ups for the Mega Drive, *Zero Wing* is probably, er, the easiest. You'll finish this within three attempts, which is a bit of a shame as it's otherwise about as good as the genre gets.
MEGA says: A really lovely, playable shoot-'em-up, but way, way too easy for all but the most unco-ordinated.

98. THUNDERFORCE 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Basically, *Thunderforce 3* with some different scrolling bits, but not quite as good.
MEGA says: OK, but why bother with this when there's *Thunderforce 3* (or *Thunderforce 4* for that matter) out there? Or *Aero Blasters* or *Hellfire*, come to that.

99. TURRICAN

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99

A supremely popular home computer game, but maybe that just shows how easy all those Amiga and ST owners are to please. *Turrican* is an absolutely colossal platform-leaping, shoot-'em-upping, landscape-exploring, epic of a game.
MEGA says: It's decent enough for a while, but if you've got the patience or the high boredom threshold needed to get to the end, you're a better man than any of us.
FOR SALE: *Turrican*
£22 – 0768 899773

100. EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99

This football game was previously seen on home computer formats as the extremely popular *Manchester United Europe*. This game is slick, fast and enjoyable, and although it's easy to beat, you'll get months of fun from the two-player mode.
MEGA says: The undisputed Mega Drive soccer king, but that title will probably go out of the window when *Super Kick-Off* makes an appearance.

TOP 100 POSITIONS

688 Attack Sub	76	New Zealand Story	54
Aero Blasters	17	NHLPA Hockey	4
Afterburner 2	51	Olympic Gold	58
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Aquatic Games	61	Phantasy Star 2	40
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James Pond	90	Thunderforce 2	98
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Joe Montana 2	72	Thunderforce 4	20
Joe Montana 3	47	Toe Jam & Earl	36
John Madden Football '93	1	Trouble Shooter	83
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LHX Attack Chopper	32	World Class Leaderboard	59
Lotus Turbo Challenge	29	World of Illusion	21
Micro Machines	3	WWF Super Wrestle Mania	71
Might and Magic	94	Zero Wing	97

TOP 100

If you don't agree with the order of our Top 100 games, then you'll probably find the game of your dreams listed below. You see, this is where we advertise the games which are a load of old nob

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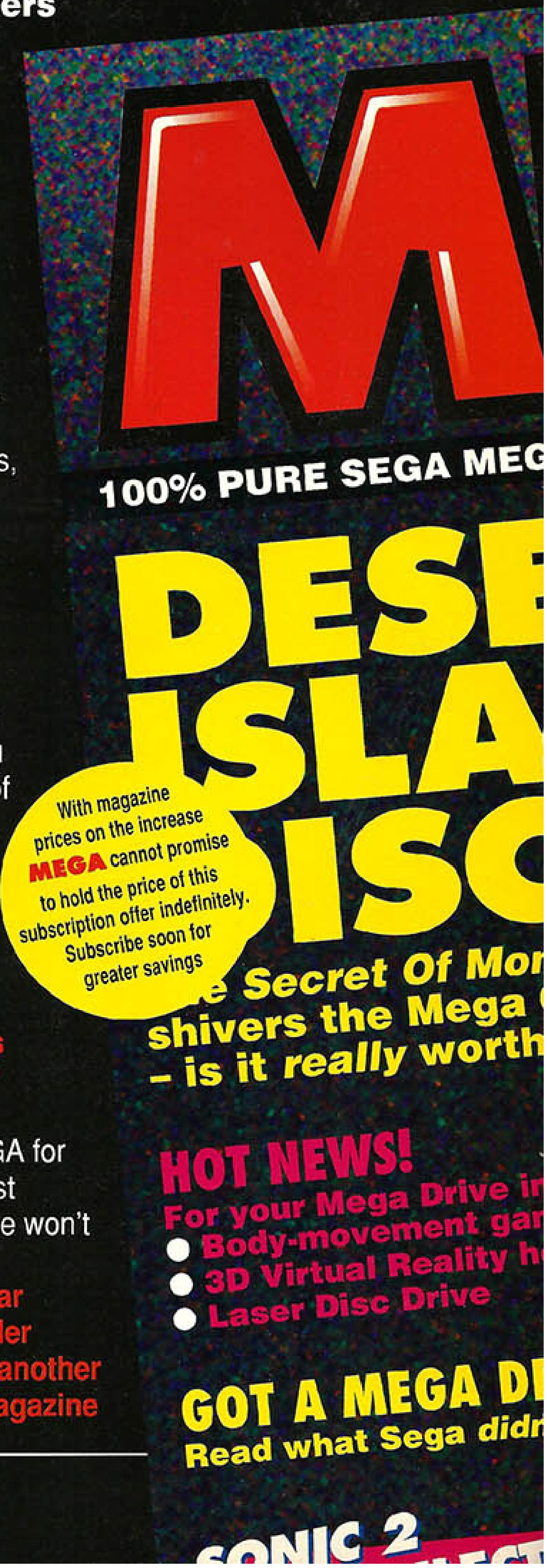
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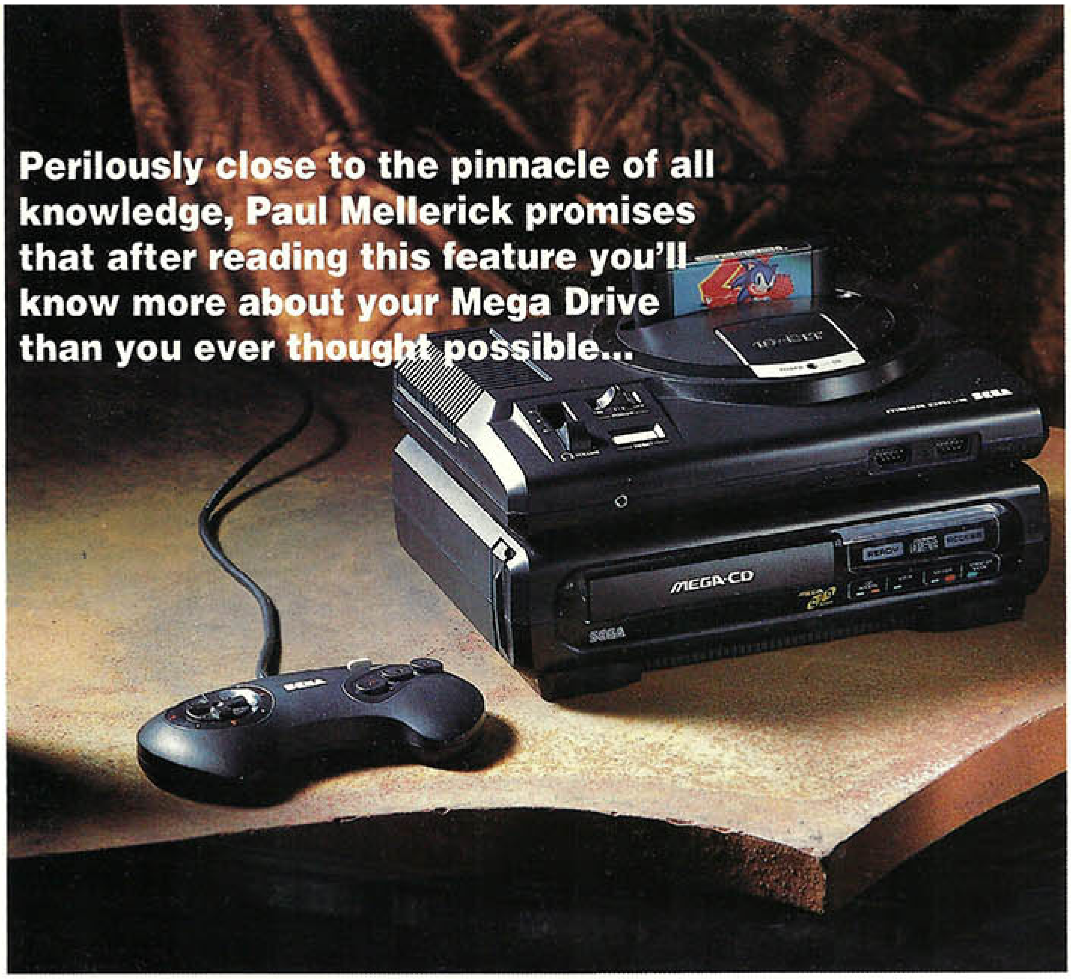


Perilously close to the pinnacle of all knowledge, Paul Mellerick promises that after reading this feature you'll know more about your Mega Drive than you ever thought possible...

Your Mega Drive is a natty little machine which originates from Japan and which enables you to play video games on your TV screen. That much, most of the nation knows by now – thanks to £15 million worth of Sega advertising.

But once you start getting into Mega Drive gameplaying, things get a tad more complicated. For example, do you know the exact differences between an English, a Japanese and an American machine? Do you know what exactly the Mega CD is and how it will work? How exactly does a cartridge work for that matter? Do you even know what's inside a cartridge?

If you're new to the Mega Drive scene, then your answers to the above questions will probably be "no" or "not exactly sure". Well then, this feature is for you. It will tell you everything the manual which came with your machine should have told you but didn't (Sega Europe don't actually acknowledge the existence of imports, compatibility problems, TV systems or cheating devices).

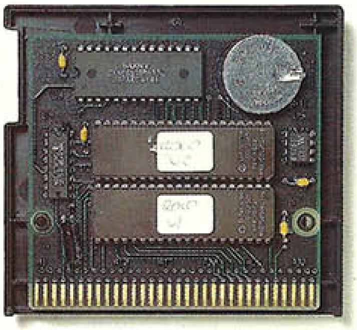
If, on the other hand, you've had your Mega Drive for a while and reckon you know pretty much everything there is to know about it, then read on anyway. Even if you don't learn anything new (and we doubt that'll be the case), then you'll come out at the end of page 91 with that self-righteous glow of egotistical smart-arsedness.

You see. MEGA *can* please all of the people all of the time.

On with the questions...

What's inside a game cartridge, exactly?

There's more to a cartridge (or cart for short) than meets the eye. Open it up and you'll see chips, solder and then some more chips. Hidden in these chips is the essential information that tells the Mega Drive the exact details of the game – all the info on how the game looks, what the characters look like, how many levels there are, and how the game plays.



Yes, this is what's inside a cart. See that thing on the left, that's, erm, a chip and that thing below it is, er, another chip. It's what's inside these chips that makes a game work

How are carts different to the tapes or floppy disks that home computers use?

As well as the obvious differences in shape and appearance, carts and floppy disks do exactly the same job, but in different ways. "Loading" a game into a home computer transfers game data from the tape or cassette to memory chips inside the computer. Once the game has finished loading, the chips are ready to play the game. Consoles don't have such chips inside them, the pre-loaded chips are found inside the game carts. So plug a cart into a console and you're ready to play straight away.

Tapes were used in the old days of Spectrum and Commodore 64s, but computers now use floppy disks instead, because they can access information much faster and they are more reliable. Most people reckon that CDs will eventually replace both carts and disks as the most popular storage medium, because they're cheap to make, last for ages, and can store tons of information.

How much does a cartridge cost to make?

As you may remember from issue two of MEGA, the actual cost of manufacturing an average sized cartridge is around £9. This is just the price it costs to actually *make* (remember, it has memory chips inside), without any of the other overheads (such as programmer's wages, design costs).

Where are all the carts made?

This entire console business started in Japan, so it's not surprising that both Sega and Nintendo have most of their cartridge-making factories in their home countries. However, some of the larger games publishers (such as EA and Flying Edge) make their own carts – hence the peculiar yellow tabs on EA carts.

Why can't Mega Drive carts work in a SNES?

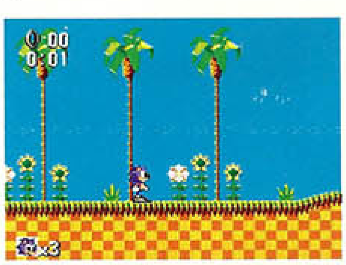
Obvious? Maybe, maybe not. When you plug in a cart, it becomes an integral part of the console – like a missing jigsaw piece. Two different types of console will effectively be two different jigsaws, hence the piece won't fit. On a more technical level, the chips inside a cart look for certain things inside a console to make them work. Because the internal differences between a Mega Drive and a Super Nintendo are so great, the SNES would search a Mega Drive cart (assuming you could plug it in – the two systems use different connectors) for information, but look in the wrong place, ask the wrong questions and not understand what information the cart fed back even if it were to say anything. You simply can't just shove any old cart in one of the machines and expect it to work.

Why can't Mega Drive carts work in a Master System (albeit with slightly less complex graphics)? They're both Sega machines...

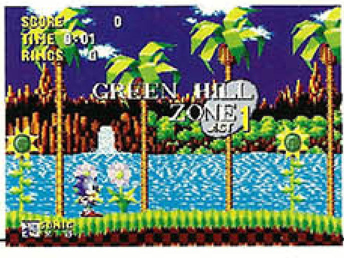
The Master System was the first Sega machine to be launched and uses old hat 8-bit technology. The Mega Drive uses spanking new 16-bit technology and so...

Hang on, hang on. What's all this 8-bit, 16-bit business then?

OK, this is a common way of describing how powerful (how fast) the console can process data – hence how quickly and detailed graphics can move. An 8-bit console (such as the Master System, the Game Gear or a Nintendo NES) can handle eight bits of information each "cycle", a 16-bit console can handle 16 bits – hence it is twice as fast. A useful analogy is comparing a 16-lane motorway to an 8 lane motorway – the larger the motorway, the more cars it can handle.



Master System: Not many colours, and not very good really



Mega Drive: Loads of colours, fab sound, and, ooh, loads more

Alright, so back to the Master System and Mega Drive. Isn't the Mega Drive just a quickened-up Master System?

No, the two machines differ greatly. The Mega Drive has all sorts of other clever chips and special devices that make it more than just twice as powerful as the Master System. You

What Sega's instruction book didn't tell you...

can buy a Master System convertor that lets you play Master System games on a Mega Drive, and this uses a process called backwards compatibility. Using some very clever architecture inside the machine and an adaptor, you can play Master System titles. All this device really does is ignore all the chips that make the Mega Drive so very different from the Master System, but there's no way Mega Drive carts could work on a Master System. A BMW can do 60 mph or 120 mph, but a Robin Reliant can only do 60 mph, no matter what sort of petrol you put in it. Now *there's* an analogy.

What is a Mbit?

You may have heard (or seen in MEGA) the word Mbit (Megabit) used a lot, but what does it actually mean? Well, the greater the number of Mbits (usually four, six or eight), the more memory the game uses. Put simply, the more Mbits, the bigger the game. Up until recently 8-Mbit carts were the norm (*Sonic, Thunder Force IV* etc.), but now Sega can make 16-Mbit carts. The first two of these BIG carts to hit the shelves are *Land Stalker*, a large Japanese RPG soon to be released over here, and *Streets of Rage 2*, a large beat-'em-up with some astounding sound. More memory though doesn't mean bigger games. With 16-Mbit carts you can now spend more time on graphics, animation and better sound.

Because console games are smaller in memory size than computer games (because they don't have to worry about a lot of the graphical workings – the console does it automatically without being told what to do) we use the term Mega*bits*. Computer games tend to be talked of in terms of Mega*bytes*. There are eight Megabits in a Megabyte, so a game like *Sonic* is equal to one Megabyte.

What does a battery back-up do?

A battery back-up is a battery that keeps a tiny part of a cart's memory operational even when it's not plugged into the console. This memory can then be used to save your position in a game and then enable you to restart the game at that point in the future.

This is of obvious benefit to large games (such as RPGs) and games that let you save your own personal scores and stats (such as *PGA Tour Golf*).

Hard Drivin'
Hard Drivin'
Hard Drivin'
GENESIS

Here they are, the three different types of cart. As you can see, the English and American versions look the same

You can buy Japanese, USA and English Mega Drives. How can you tell which is which?

The first one to be launched, the Jap Mega Drive, is very recognisable because of its purple trim all over the place. The USA version (called Genesis) and the English Mega Drive look very similar and you can tell the difference only by the name on the front by the cartridge slot.

Which games work on which machines?

a) For Japanese machines – If you've bought a Jap Mega Drive, then you really don't have any problems with compatibility. The Jap cart slot is rounded to play Jap games. The Genesis and Mega Drive carts are squared at the edges, but they still fit into the slot.

b) For American machines – Getting hold of an American Genesis (they don't call it a Mega Drive) is tough in the UK, because they cost a bit more to import than Jap machines and the only advantage they offer over English machines is the fact that they run 20% faster (due to different TV signal standards between the two countries). The cart slot is the same shape, and so are the carts. You can buy a bridge adaptor that lets you shove Jap games in the top, thus giving you all-round compatibility.

c) For English machines – The official Mega Drive is the most popular one, but it looks just the same as the Genesis. You can play most American games on your English Mega Drive, but some are configured to run especially on the American TV systems and so don't work at all on English Mega Drives. One such game is *Speedball 2*. You need to check out the information on different TV systems in this feature to get the whole picture.

Note: The above descriptions are up to date at the time of going to press, but you'd be advised to take a look at the information on Security Chips that Sega are introducing into their software if you have any further queries.

Can you modify different machines to run all three sorts of games?

You can always file down the edges on a Genesis or English Mega Drive to fit Jap carts, but a bridge adaptor will do the same job without the fuss. Running a Genesis in the UK is awkward because of different power supply standards and TV signal standards.

Which machine does MEGA advise buying?

Although you can get a good import machine cheaper than an official one and with a guarantee, we have to recommend that you go for the official English Mega Drive. With all the problems concerning new security chips (see the next question) and the new Mega CD being compatible only with English Mega Drives, you'd be better off sticking with the official one.

Turn Over

What's all this security chip business then?

To stop the spread of imported carts and to split the world market into three sections, Sega are introducing Security Chips. These little extras, fitted into carts, detect what country's system you're running and whether the cart is an import or not. The first of these was *Thunderforce IV*. Try to run the Jap cart on an English machine and it won't load; you'll just get a message saying that the game is only meant to be played in Japan.

What are NTSC, SCART, PAL and what do they all mean?

These are three acronyms that are bandied around, and here's what they mean. The first thing you need to understand is that NTSC and PAL are TV systems and that SCART is a socket that lets you view the NTSC signal.

The NTSC system is used in Japan and America and works at a speed at 60hz, the PAL system is used in Europe and runs at 50hz. There are all sorts of other technical differences, but this is the most fundamental.

Well, we all own one of these, don't we? What do you mean NO?

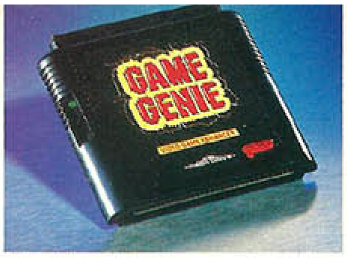
You can import Jap and American machines, but, unless you have them altered, you can only view the picture if your TV has a SCART socket. You can buy a SCART lead to work with the official Mega Drive, but this just gives you a slightly brighter picture.

Is it worth buying Sega gear direct from Japan or America if I get the chance?

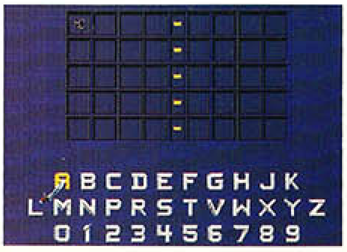
It's worth buying things like carts (as long as you are sure they will work), but never buy machines, because different countries use different electrical systems and this can cause lots of problems. If you do want imported stuff, check with your friendly console dealer.

What's a cheating cartridge?

A cheating cart, such as the Game Genie or the Action Replay, is a great device. If you're having trouble getting far in a game or you want to make an easy game that little bit harder, then these are for you.



Finding your own codes is tough, but the results can be very funny



This is where you put in all those codes. You then press Start to see all those funny bits

How do cheating devices work?

Slot a cheating cart into your Mega Drive, then put your game cart on top of that and switch on. You should see a code input screen. This is where you get the chance to input codes that will alter and tailor specific parts of the game. For example, you can change the number of lives your player has from three to 1000.

Which should I buy, the Pro Action Replay or the Game Genie?

This is a difficult question to answer, because they are both as good as each other in the things that they do.

The Pro Action Replay has the unique feature of allowing you to look for basic codes by yourself – you don't have to rely on codes from the manufacturers.

The Game Genie, however, is a bit different. Although you can't find your own codes as easily, the codes available from the manufacturers tend to be entertainingly strange or wacky (such as altering the height of your character's jump) as well as the usual infinite lives variety.

When you buy either cart, you'll get a code book featuring loads of games, and you'll be regularly updated on new codes. Buy a Game Genie, and you'll *also* be able to ring up a helpline if you get really stuck.

One thing worth noting is that these carts only affect the game while you're playing it. Turn it off and on again and the game will be back to normal.

What other add-ons can I get for my Mega Drive?

Ah, now there's a question. Add-ons can vary from the useful to the incredibly ridiculous. In issue two (if you haven't got a copy, get your back issue now – see page 87) we did a quick rundown of all the most popular add-ons, namely joysticks, joypads and things, but there are plenty of other things around.

What's The Menacer?

The latest addition to the add-on family is the Menacer, a light gun. A light gun is a device that enables you to aim and "shoot" objects on the screen in games like *Terminator 2*.

The last time I got my hands on something that big I was.. (Snip)

How it works is kind of complicated, but here's an attempted explanation.

Your TV screen is updated (a new picture is shown) 50 times a second. The new screen doesn't just flash into existence, but each pixel (the dots that make up the picture) is changed in order. When you aim the Menacer at a point on the screen, the Menacer can detect when the pixel it's aimed at is updated. This information is immediately fed back to the Mega Drive (by use of an infra-red transmitter and receiver). The Mega Drive knows which pixel (there are 71,680 in total) is being updated at which time, and so when it gets a message from the Menacer saying that the pixel it's pointed at has just been updated, it can work out which pixel the Menacer is pointed at. Follow this so far? Good, I'll continue.

If the Mega Drive knows which pixel the Menacer is aimed at (and this is accurate to the nearest fiftieth of a second), then it's not too hard to draw a cross-hair or sight on screen at the relevant place and work out if the player is hitting or missing his targets. Easy.

The games at the moment aren't that good, with the exception of *Terminator 2*, but expect more in the future. If you fancy more information on the Menacer, read the special feature in issue four of MEGA (back issues available – page 87) or visit your local dealer.

What's a Master System convertor?

We mentioned the Master System Convertor before, and it really is quite an old piece of kit. The convertor sits on top of your Mega Drive, and you simply plug in your Master System cart and play using a conventional Mega Drive joypad. There are some really good Master System games, and the unit, priced at £30, is good value for money. This piece of hardware is ideal for someone who's upgraded from their Master System to a Mega Drive, but who can't sell all their games.

If I want another joypad or joystick, which should I buy?

We recommend the SG Pro Pad or the Competition Pro Series II. Either one is as good as the other. For you joystick fans, try the Intruder 3 – very useful with games like *Desert Strike* and *LHX Attack Chopper*. Give Quickshot a ring for more details – 081 365 1993. For the full report, get yourself a copy of issue two of MEGA.

What is the Mega CD, exactly?

You may have seen some CD reviews in past issues of MEGA, and wondered what the hell was going on. Well first let's clear up some confusion.

The Mega CD, the Sega CD, the Mega Drive CD ROM and the Mega CD ROM are all the same machine. People just call it by different names. The machine will be called the Mega CD when it is officially launched over here on March 1, so that's what we'll call it from now on.

The Mega CD is an add-on to any existing Mega Drive, and it's NOT a new machine in itself. At the moment (Sega are currently redesigning it) it sits below your Mega Drive. The Mega CD basically turbocharges your Mega Drive, offering a whole new range of features, which include the following.

- Every single Mega Drive game ever released to date (and there's over 250 of them) could fit on a single CD easily. The Mega CD has immense storage capacity – 650 Megabytes of data on one single disk. Most Mega Drive games use just one Megabyte (8 Megabits = Megabyte) so the games could be huge.
- CDs cost less than £1 to manufacture, cartridges cost £10. So a drop in game prices is possible. But (and isn't there always a but?) because Mega CD games will take so long to develop, they'll probably end up costing the same.
- All Mega CD games will be "fingerprinted" with a special code, according to whether they are designed for use in Japan, the USA or Europe. If you try to use a CD outside its allocated area, it won't work. Sega 1:grey importers 0.
- The Mega CD is basically an entire computer in itself. A Motorola MC68000 Central Processing Unit running at an impressive 12.5 Mhz is the brains of the Mega CD. This is the same processor that controls the Mega Drive, though the Mega Drive runs at only 7.6 Mhz. The two chips work hand in hand; the CPU controls all the operations of the Mega CD, freeing the Mega Drive's CPU to get on with the business of running the game without interruption. So there's all this, as well as custom graphics chips for scrolling and scaling.

And here we show the *amazing* differences between music and game CDs

- Sega are reckoning on selling a Mega CD to 25% of all existing UK Mega Drive owners in 1993 alone – that's over 250,000 machines.
- Audio CDs play just as well as games. All the normal functions you'd expect on any half-decent CD player are there – you can program tracks, select random play and so on. Two phono jacks on the back of the machine allow you to link it up to a hi-fi and

really give the neighbours something to complain about.

- The Mega CD has a couple of lights on the front, but nothing else. There are no controls, not a single button to press, on the outside of the unit. It's even switched on via the power button on top of the Mega Drive – everything is controlled via the joypad using a pointer system. You place the arrow over the various icons that appear on screen using Up, Down, Left and Right on the direction pad.
- Sounds. Theoretically, the compact disc could be used to play sampled sound effects too, but the laser pick-up head can't be in two places at once, and so to have both music and sound effects playing simultaneously, the Mega CD has a very powerful sound chip built into it. This chip provides eight channels of sound using a technique called Pulse Code Modulation (PCM for short). Compare this to the Mega Drive's three-channel chip and you can be sure that the Mega CD's sound will kick.
- CD loads data almost at the speed of light, but it's still not fast enough to load data and keep up with the gameplay. For this reason, 768K of buffer memory have been built in. The main core of the game is copied from the CD into this memory, along with the data for the current level. Additional levels are accessed when they're needed.
- The most exciting bits of hardware inside the Mega CD are two graphics' chips. The scaling chip allow images to be re-sized at a lightning fast pace to add perspective to games, while the rotation chip allows sprites to be rotated smoothly at any angle. All this is done under these chips' own power, freeing the processor even more to get on with the business of running the game code.
- The Mega CD can be used to play CD+G (Compact Disc + Graphics) disks. CD+G disks have video pictures stored on them which can be displayed on a TV while the music is being played. The CD+G format never really took off, and disks with such capability are rare – shame.

CD graphics are fab and well groovy, so let's all get down and hang out with old Jimi Hendrix

But are the *games* any good?

They're getting better. Keep watching the review pages of MEGA.

What's a WonderMega then?

You may have also heard talk of a WonderMega. The WonderMega was launched in Japan in the summer of last year, and it is basically the result of a joint venture between Sega and JVC (called Victor JVC in Japan). This machine combines a normal Mega Drive and Mega CD in one nice compact little unit. However, because the machine was co-developed by JVC, it can also be used for karaoke and CD mixing, without adding any extra parts.

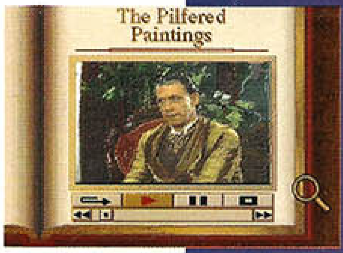
OK, so how much will it cost and what will I get for my money?

Sega still haven't decided, and exchange rates are playing havoc with pricing plans (although we think it should cost in the region of £250), but if the UK deal is anything like the package that was launched in the USA, it should go something like this:

- Software – *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective*, a Five In One Classic CD Pack (consisting of *Columns, Streets of Rage, Revenge of Shinobi, Super Monaco GP* and *Golden Axe*), *Cobra Command* (called *Thunderstorm FX* in Japan and reviewed in issue three of MEGA), and finally, *Sol-Feace*, one of the first shoot-'em-ups for the Mega CD.
- Hardware – Spanking new Mega CD.

What's all this about a Mega Drive 2 and a new Mega CD?

After over two years on sale in the UK and after being available in Japan for over three years, the Mega Drive is to have a new shape, which according to Sega will be "smaller, sleeker and sexier". The new Mega Drive will be called the Mega Drive 2 (must have taken them AGES, to come up with that one). Don't worry though, it won't make the old Mega Drive obsolete, because the carts will still be the same. The big news, however, is that the Mega CD is also to be redesigned so that it fits on to the Mega Drive sideways, instead of underneath it. Obviously with over 1,200,000 old-style Mega Drives in the UK already, the new Mega CD will still be compatible with them, but it will also work with the new Mega Drive 2. As soon as we find out more, you can be sure we'll tell you.



Sherlock Holmes opens his case-book for sleuthing Mega CD players

What does the future hold?

You can listen to various rumours until you're blue in the face, but the fact is that nobody is really sure what the future will bring. Will the next generation be 32- or 64-bit? Will it still be compatible with the Mega Drive? Who knows.

The new machine will be launched in 1994 though, and it will most likely be a 32-bit machine. The codename for this machine is the Giga Drive. Now don't get too excited, because nobody has seen it yet. In fact, nobody knows any details at all at the moment, but as soon as Sega want the world to know, we'll tell you. For the moment, you'll have to make do with reading what Sega USA's boss has to say in an exclusive interview with MEGA on page 6 of this very issue. Ⓜ

JARGON BUSTER

Just in case you're still confused about some of the terms used in this feature, and throughout the rest of MEGA for that matter (and if you're new to the world of computer games, then there's no reason why you shouldn't be), here is a quick rundown of those all-important techie terms.

Software – Games, really. Not the cart (that's hardware), but the information written inside is software.

Hardware – The actual physical bits 'n' bobs that the computer and assorted add-ons are made of. Here's an analogy: your body is hardware, the thoughts inside your head are bits of software.

Mbit – Short for Megabit. This is a measurement of memory. Most games are 8Mbit (*Sonic*), but newer ones can be up to 16Mbit (*Streets of Rage 2*).

CD ROM – The CD stands for Compact Disc and the ROM stands for Read Only Memory. This means that the machine uses the CD for games. Simple really.

NTSC – An acronym for something, but I don't know what (Not The Same Channel, or something). The important thing, however, is that it refers to the Japanese and American TV systems.

PAL – Another acronym and I still don't know what it means. This is the European TV system.

SCART – This is an interface that allows for better audio and video picture quality.

Security Chips – Special chips used in finished games, that detect which machine you are using the game on and whether or not it is an import. If the game is an import, it won't run on the hardware.

RPG – This means role playing game. It's a game in which you take on the role of a character and interact with others on a quest.

Shoot-'em-up – Probably the most common type of game for the Mega Drive. The whole idea of the game is to shoot things. Usually written around a space/future scenario, these games, if done well, are essential purchases. They come in two main types; horizontal scrolling and vertical scrolling. Check entry on scrolling below for more information. *Hellfire* and *Aero Blasters* are two of the best shoot-'em-ups around.

Scrolling – Scrolling is simply the movement of a screen from one direction to another. Games like *Sonic* scroll in all directions, but things like *Hellfire* scroll horizontally left to right.

Parallax – This effect is used to add realism to games that scroll along. Parallax are layers (usually in the background) that move in relation to the action. If you're running through a street, the buildings will move past you faster than, say, a hill in the background.

Platform game (platformer) – Platform games are very popular and their name says it all. *Sonic* is a platformer (all those platforms you see) so is *Rainbow Islands*. These games also tend to star incredibly cute animals and things. Don't know why though.

Top-down – The action is viewed from above.

1-up – Simple, find one of these in a game, pick it up and you will miraculously get one extra life.

Continue – After you've used up all your lives and died, you may be able to carry on by using a continue – similar to the result of putting another coin in an arcade slot machine. Some games will allow you to continue from where you were, others will send you back to the start of the level.

Passwords – Large games that have stages use these so that you don't have to do a level all over again. *Lemmings*, with 180 levels, has a password for each level, so you can enter a password at the start of each fresh game session and start from wherever you left off.

Battery Back-Up – This is a battery inside your cartridge which stores information so that you can continue from where you last left the game. This is very useful, and you'll find the facility in role playing games more than in any other type of game

Power-ups – Fancy getting hold of some turbo-nutter galactic space weapon? First you've got to collect the power-ups. Used to best effect in shoot-'em-ups and platformers, they add another dimension to the game by enabling you to build up your ship's/character's weapons and/or strength as the game progresses. If you die having collected power-ups, however, you are usually put back to your original abilities when you continue.

Grey import – A grey import is a cart that has been imported from another country. They're called grey, because they are not official products.

Sprite – A sprite is a character on screen. Sonic is a sprite, all the players in *NHLPA Hockey* are sprites, but the ice rink isn't a sprite.

PURCHASE

Got the rainy season, hole-in-the-wallet blues? Well, bring a little sunshine into an otherwise doomy gloomy day by picking up one of our mail order bargains

MEGA
MEGA
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100% PURE SEGA MEGA DRIVE...

ZY FI SPEAKERS

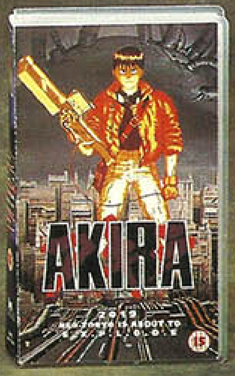
As we write this The Black Crowes (courtesy of our resident rockster Paul Mellerick) is blasting out from MEGA's very own pair of Zy Fi speakers. And what wonderful definition of sound they produce (More like a bloody row if you ask me – Andy "ABC" Dyer) *and* they fit very comfortably at either end of Neil's "busy" desk. Zy Fi speakers as used by MEGA, yours for £35.99.

Code MEGSPE **Price £35.99**

MEGA BINDER

Well, what can we say about the MEGA binder, except that it's a bloody good idea to have one if you're a big fan of the magazine? Keep all your copies of MEGA together so you know exactly where to find them when you are desperate for the code to level 25 of *Lemmings*. Also, protect your copies from tea spillage and large slobbering dogs.

Code MEGBIN/2 **Price £5.99/£11.00**



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Code MEGPP2 **Price £14.99**

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Enjoy the art of Japanese animation from Manga Video. Akira (only suitable for people over the age of 15) is graphically stunning and it comes highly recommended by the MEGA team.

Code MEGAV **Price £12.99**

ACTION REPLAY PRO

Want to create your own cheats or discover levels you didn't even suspect existed? Then get yourself an *Action Replay Pro* . Note: *Action Replay Pro* doubles as a Japanese cart adaptor.

Code MEGACT **Price £44.99**

WELL, IT'S BARGAINS APLENTY AT MEGA. I'M DEFINITELY ON FOR SOME OF THIS

☐ **Mega Binder Price £5.99 (or £11 for two) Code MEGBIN (2 = MEGBIN2)** ☐ **Zydec Zy Fi speaker system £35.99 Code MEGSPE**

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MEGA/ISSUE6/393

WIN 52 CARTS

Gamesville are offering one MEGA reader a game a week for a year

Flabby Sega shop Gamesville and MEGA proudly present the cunningly entitled "Win a cart a week for a year"™ competition, so named because one lucky winner will indeed get a new cart of his/her choice (up to the value of £40) every week for a year.

Picture the scene: it's Friday. Rush home from school/work, scan your latest issue of MEGA, rush for the phone, spend five highly embarrassing minutes confusing the local Chinese take-away, realise that you've dialled the wrong number, try again, get through to Gamesville and order any game that takes your fancy from their extensive stock.

Sounds a decent enough prize? It all adds up to over £2,000 worth of games, so you lot (or one of you anyway) should be satisfied. All you have to do to win is send in a picture of your elder sister in the shower. No, that's not right at all (unfortunately). All you really have to do is tell us why you feel you should be the winner of this compo – in exactly 52 words – no more, no less.

Write your tale of woe/deprivation/anticipation/blind faith on a postcard or sealed-down envelope to the **"I had my suspicions, but now I know Gamesville are fab"** Compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW, to arrive before 30 March 1993.

RULES

1. No employees from Future Publishing or Gamesville are allowed to enter
2. All entries must reach us before 30 March 1993 or else the paper goes straight in the bin
3. Gamesville will endeavour to provide as large a range of titles as possible, but your choice of cart is restricted to those costing under £40 which happen to be in stock
4. The prize is 52 games – no more, no less – over the period of a year
5. And that's quite enough of this rule business

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BULLS vs LAKERS
ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT
FORGOTTEN WORLDS
FLICKY
FANTASIA
TEAM USA BASKETBALL
ART ALIVE
ROAD RASH
AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GP II
STREETS OF RAGE
TECHNOCOP
TWIN HAWK
SONIC 2
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SMASH TV
BUCK ROGERS
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KID CHAMELEON
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Fancy selling your old carts? Call Gamesville at their new Brighton shop on 0273 620814 or on 0293 541953. Say MEGA sent you

MEGA MOUTH

Many people have called me many things in my time (but mostly git – Andy). However, I'd like you to think of me simply as Neil West: a friend. Now where did I put those peasants' letters?

FOOTBALL CRAZY

Dear MEGA,
Could you tell me when *Super Kick Off* is coming out for the Mega Drive? Also, is it true that *Sensible Soccer* is coming out for the Mega Drive? If so, when, and how will it compare to the Amiga version?

Are there any other good football games in the pipeline for the Mega Drive? Also, how much will games cost for the Mega CD and is the Mega CD worth buying in the first place?
Michael Kane, Dumfries

***Super Kick Off* has finally arrived. Turn to page 52 for the full review**

Dear Michael,
Super Kick Off *is upon us, and if you quickly flip to page 52 you'll be able to read the full review. As for other footy games, well, they're a bit thin on the ground. Still, since you asked, we can now tell you a bit about* Sensible Soccer. *It's being programmed as we speak, but that doesn't necessarily mean it'll see the light of day. We'll find out more and let you know.* ***Neil***

GETTING BIGGER ALL THE TIME

Dear MEGA,
I'm writing to you about an issue that I find confusing. I don't know much about how games work, but it's pretty obvious that Mbit stands for the game's capacity. How is it then that when the Mega Drive came out in England, the biggest game size was 8Mbit? Then a 12-Mbit game came out and we were told that this was the ultimate game size. But now there are 16-Mbit games and Sega never said they could get this big. Can they get any bigger and would Sega want to go to the trouble to make them bigger (not to mention more costly) as it seems they have done before? Is this true, can they get still bigger?

Please answer my letter, as I feel you will give me a decent explanation. Well done on a brill mag.
Craig Ingleton, Calne

Dear Craig,
Mbit does indeed denote the size of a game cartridge, memory-wise at least. But that doesn't mean that a 16-Mbit game will last any longer or be any bigger than an 8-Mbit game. The thing is, if a game has lots and lots of graphics, it'll take up lots of memory, but the game itself might not contain that much depth or that many levels. Um, tell you what, instead of listening to me wibble on about it, why not take a look at our special feature starting on page 16. It's a sort of beginners guide to the Mega Drive and it explains all those things that most of us take for granted, but which newcomers won't necessarily have a clue about. ***Neil***

WHAT A PRICE WE PAY?

Dear MEGA,
I have recently bought a Mega Drive and have bought various magazines for info on games, tips etc. But they were all poo! MEGA, however, is soooo excellent that I have placed a regular order. Yes, I was really that impressed.

I also tried the passwords for *Lemmings* that you printed, but they didn't work. Why?

With carts costing in the region of £40 each I would have to spend £200 to get five games. And that's a lot of money by anyone's standards. Can Sega really justify such prices? I know a lot of time goes into creating games, but surely the cheaper they are, the more Sega will sell. Maybe they are content to sell less and get more money? But considering most buyers are at schools or colleges, is it fair to charge so much when we don't have oodles of money?

Well, that's my gripe over with, and at least MEGA's excellent and witty reviews prevent us from buying the crappy games, so that when we've saved up £40 we get a worthwhile game.

PS. Seeing as I love you all dearly and I've subscribed, do I win a cart or at least a T-shirt or something? (Sloppy kiss to you all!)
Mark Murray, Scarborough

Lemmings
1 PLAYER
2 PLAYERS
PASS WORD
You need building & digging skills!

American *Lemmings* codes don't work on British Mega Drives. Poop!

Dear Mark,
About those Lemmings *codes. They were all correct (Well most of them anyway – Paul), but sadly, they were correct only for the American version of the game, an import copy of which we received before the official English version was released. If you take a look at page 63, however, you'll now find the English codes.*

Onto the problem of prices. Whether carts are over-priced or not is debatable (check out the news story in issue two of MEGA), but as we speak, the Office Of Fair Trading is stepping up its investigation into Sega and Nintendo's pricing policies in order to see if they're abusing their powerful positions in order to keep prices high.

As for winning a prize, well, who needs prizes when you can purchase a bargain from our mail order page (page 92) or secure delivery of the next 14 issues of MEGA for just £23.40 (see page 88)? ***Neil***

SEGA SITUATION

In issue four of MEGA we announced that Sega had stopped sending magazines advance review copies of games. Instead, we are invited to "take a look" at Sega's new games at their HQs in London. With only a severely limited play time and Sega looking over our shoulders, MEGA refuse to give the games which are reviewed under these circumstances a final rating. Here are some of our readers' reactions to this new Sega policy.

Dear MEGA,
Here are my comments regarding the subject of Sega games being kept under lock and key – it stinks.

When I purchase games I depend on magazines to produce reliable reviews and I would like to think that if all magazine companies stopped advertising their games (Sega games), the public wouldn't purchase them because I, for one, certainly don't buy a game because the cover looks pretty. I'm sure Sega could bend the rules a bit for you. I mean, the public pay enough for these games, surely that gives us some right to ask them to put trust in your mag and other magazines as well. As if you would pirate games? How tight can Sega get?

If you stopped advertising their games, surely it wouldn't help them to sell 'em? Probably make them rethink?
Wayne Hill

Dear MEGA,
Don't bother to review Sega titles until they reverse their ridiculous decision with regard to review copies.

Sega are once again demonstrating a heavy handedness in dealing with the humble punter. First we had the ban on rentals, then disputes with certain software houses (maybe because they produce better games). Now there is a bid to influence game reviews. Does this have anything to do with the increasing number of poor or average review scores that Sega titles receive?

BLAGGED!

Dear BLAGGED,
I need your help! I am a huge Mega Drive fan, and I always read your mag! My parents come from Bath and I have a brother-in-law who is a computer journalist.

My father and mother were recently busted for money laundering and so I am increasingly dependent on my three little sisters who are working as prostitutes in King's Cross. My only brother is serving a life sentence in Brixton prison on a conviction of armed robbery.

The problem is that I am currently in love with an Argentinian "hostess" who works near the courts of London. She says she loves me, but she knows nothing of my background.

She is quite an understanding girl, so she doesn't mind me spending long hours with my Mega Drive. We intend to marry just as soon as her illnesses clear up. I want to bring her into my family, but I also want to be completely honest with her. Should I tell her that my brother-in-law is a computer journalist?
Warren Chrismas

Well, Warren, it's not strictly a BLAGGED! in the true sense of the word, but this story was so spectacularly elaborate (and, dare we say, untrue) that we feel obliged to send you a cart anyway.

If you want to win a cart, send your ridiculous begging letters to: Blagged!, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

RANTING ABOUT RATINGS

Dear MEGA,
Your magazine is really, really... (damn, where's my Thesaurus? Ah) ... MEGA. Anyway, to the point.

I have often read reviews of two-player games, which conclude, "This game sucks mightily, it's a disgrace to the programmers and should be avoided at all costs. But, on the other hand, the two-player mode is excellent and makes this game a classic worthy of a place in anyone's collection," or something like that. The reviewers then go on to give a game a percentage which means absolutely nothing.

Wouldn't it be a good idea to give multi-player games two separate ratings, one as a single-player and the other as a two- (or more) player game? This way, readers would be able to see if the game was a good buy depending on the way in which it was played.

The same problems lie with the new Menacer games. They should have one rating for joypad users and another for Menacer users. A Menacer user isn't going to care if the joypad controls are rubbish and a game shouldn't be marked down because of that. I hope you consider these points.
Lee Maguire, Ascot

***T2* can be used with either Menacer or joypad. Should it get two ratings?**

Dear Lee,
To be honest, most games are well programmed enough to be entertaining and challenging in both single and two-player modes. So in the majority of cases we'd be giving two ratings that differ by only one or two percent. This would be both a waste of valuable space and time.

What we try to do (and we apologise if we've failed to at any time) is give the game an overall rating, then explain quite clearly in the text that while it falls down in one area, it more than makes up for it in another. However, as in the case of the light gun, you have a very valid point. Playing with a light gun and a joypad are two very different kettles of fish and so, in future, we'll find some way of catering for users of both types of controller (possibly). Neil

SONIC SLIP-UP

Dear MEGA,
First of all, well done on producing a brilliant mag. I used to be a Sega Pro reader, but I am no longer that sad. Anyway, a complaint. In issue two of your brill mag you reviewed *Sonic 2* (best game ever) and in your "change" boxes you said, "We're looking at 36 levels". Well, I have got *Sonic 2* and I can assure you that it has not got 36 levels. It actually has about 20 levels. Even if you had included bonus stages, it still would not have doubled the levels of the original.

Good luck on future issues.
Stephen Francis, Hertfordshire

Dear Stephen
Er, yes, well. As you can probably appreciate, it would take a God to be able to play every single game reviewed right through to the very end within the time it takes to get an issue of MEGA together.

We play the games as thoroughly as possible (and more thoroughly, we think, than many other mags) within the time available. In the case of Sonic 2, *we received the game, and were told by Sega that there would be 36 levels. Having played the game almost through to completion (unknowingly), we wrote the review and later discovered that in fact, having completed nearly twenty levels, we didn't have another 16 or so to complete, but only another couple. So there we go. Unfortunately, due to a little misinformation, we got it a bit wrong.*

Still, we believe the review was thorough and did reflect the game and its challenge accurately. Even in the belief that there were more levels, we still said it wouldn't last all that long. Neil

***Sonic 2.* Not as many levels as first believed, but the rating still stands**

MADDENING SIMPLICITY

Dear MEGA,
You refer in your reviews to the fact that games are often too easy. However, you have made no mention of this in your review of *John Madden '92/'93*. I devised my own 16-game schedule for the New York Giants, home and away. At the end of the first season, I was 19 and 0, Superbowl Champion and holder of virtually every NFL record in the book including a staggering 822 points in the regular season alone (I outscored my opponents by an average of five touchdowns). Admittedly this was a good team, but I was operating a ball-control offence. I tried playing against New York, result: Philadelphia 77, New York 0. I tried playing as a

Turn Over

If games magazines comply with Sega's wishes and review their titles in a "controlled" environment, then the magazines are ultimately shortchanging their readers. Longevity is a crucial aspect of all games and it cannot be guessed at.

I certainly won't buy a cart that hasn't been thoroughly reviewed and I won't buy a magazine that lets itself be compromised. Having said that, I'm sure MEGA (or any Future Publishing magazine) will ensure that their readers' interests are put above the pressures to review all the latest titles. With a bit of appropriate pressure, I'm sure Sega will see sense.
Ed King

Dear MEGA,
The new reviewing policy that Sega have come up with is absolutely ridiculous, there is no question about that.

The average person in the street is given only about ten minutes maximum to play a game in their high street store, and if we don't have realistic magazine reviews on which to further help us decide, we're going to make some very wrong decisions.

You see, that is why it is important that Sega get the situation sorted, and let your mag review their games properly – you're a bunch of diamond geezers after all – and MEGA's reviews eliminate any doubt which might linger around new releases due to half-finished reviews of games from some other half-arsed magazine.
Dakeyne

Dear Wayne, Ed, and Dakeyne,
Thanks for your support. So far, Sega have made no change to their policy of refusing to send us games to review before their release.

The good news, however, is that after visiting the giant CES video game show in Las Vegas, I've been able to secure a deal with loads more American games publishers to get games directly from them – so on the whole MEGA's games coverage will improve. Anyway, thanks again for your support. Neil

MEGA MORONS

Dear MEGA
Almost three years ago my husband was agging my eyes out (local expression) for a Mega Drive. So not being able to stand seeing a grown man cry, I finally gave in to him.

Off he went as fast as his little legs could carry him to the local computer store. He soon returned, eyes full of glee, and hands trembling, hardly able to contain himself while he eagerly set up one of the first grey import scart Japanese Mega Drives to hit these shores. It cost considerably more than those of today and there was no free game. So I paid another unexpected £40 for *Revenge Of Shinobi*, but it was all worth it just to see his little face.

Soon after, the machine was converted to give English text on most Japanese games. Since then he has been completely hooked. He knows all the latest tips and cheats, when new releases are due and he memorises games percentages on your reviews. He has now accumulated over twenty games, all of which work OK with the exception of *Super Hang On* and *Moonwalker*. Although these games work as normal, the music is much slower. Why is this?

Because he has been good of late and has sold his telescope, cigarette cards and even his train set to make more room for his Sega set up, I am now contemplating buying him a Mega CD for our silver wedding anniversary. I don't know what I'll get, probably a game, but I'll do anything to keep that bottom lip from trembling. Will I need to buy a Japanese Mega CD or will the official Mega CD work on his machine? And is my husband one of your oldest "big kids"? He is 43 going on 16. However, since he has become a Sega Mega Drive nutcase I have always known where he is at nights and his only pet hate is when the kids distract his concentration when they are playing with their yo-yos.

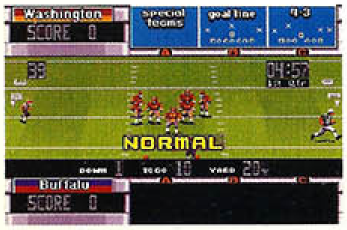
Keep up the good work, I'm all for it. It keeps him out of the pub and I can watch whatever I like on telly.
Mrs Linda Brown, Notts

Dear Mrs B,
We don't really know what to say about that little lot. Your old man really is a bit of a crusty, isn't he? Still, what's good for us young, beautiful, healthy folk must also be alright for shambling old wrecks like yours indoors.

By the way, we have no idea why the music should run slower on those two games you mentioned. Perhaps it is simply because your machine is fairly old, but if anyone out there knows of any other reason, do tell us.

And unfortunately, you'll have to either buy a Japanese Mega CD, or sell the lot and start again with a UK set up. The machines are incompatible, but if you can live with playing only Jap software, then go for it.

And in case you're wondering why we put you in MEGA MORONS, it's not because you're moronic (which you quite obviously aren't), it's because you're old. And in our book, that more than justifies some gratuitous abuse. And because of your obscene ages, your prize is a bag of boiled sweets (because old people always have a bag of foul boiled sweets to torture their grandchildren with). Bye-bye wrinklies. Neil crap team, result: Green Bay 56, Washington 0 (my quarterback had eight touchdowns and no interceptions). In your own words "this is a disaster, there's no getting away from it". I was looking forward to playing several seasons working towards Superbowl glory (substituting the game's play-offs with my own full season), but the one-player game is simply a dead loss.



***Madden '93*. Too easy for one, but it's a classic head-to-header**

I appreciate that as a hardened football nut I was already well-versed in the tactics of the game, but surely the cart is aimed at people like me. It is a fact that the passing in *John Madden '92*, whether in one- or two-player mode, is unrealistically easy (and almost impossible to defend against in two-player mode).

I think that if you are going to criticise games for being too easy, you should at least be consistent.

Martin Middleton, Norwich

Dear Martin,

We did actually say that Madden *was easy to complete, and that gameplay-wise in the one-player game it hadn't been improved. But at the end of the day, we still thought that for sheer head-to-head excitement, it was (and still is) unbeatable. Indeed, your point that the challenge is limited for real fans of American footy is very valid. The game is, however, the best of its kind, and for the majority of players, it's also arguably the slickest game ever to appear on the Mega Drive. While it would be stupid to ignore the lack of challenge completely, slagging this cart would be like saying chess is crap because you can't play it on your own. **Neil***

MAIL ORDER RECOMMENDATION

Dear MEGA,

As I was looking at your magazine yesterday I noticed an advertisement for games like *Lemmings*. The games would normally cost £40, but they were advertised for only £30. Now to you, £30 may seem like nothing, but to me, being only 13 years old, £30 is a lot of money and after hearing stories of people being ripped off by mail order I was wondering if either you or any of your readers could recommend a fast cheap reliable mail order place (if there is one).

Linda McLean, Glasgow

Dear Linda,

The vast majority of mail order firms are decent, honest organisations which can provide you with carts cheaply and efficiently. There are, however, a few dodgy geezers who are out to rip you off. Hopefully, they never even get to advertise in MEGA because our ad department is very careful about that sort of thing. But just to make sure you don't fall prey to this sort of thing, there are a few simple rules to follow.

Always make sure the advert is accompanied by a telephone number. Give the company a ring, and if you keep getting an Ansafone, think twice. If you do place an order, pay for your purchase using a credit card.

But basically, try out one of the companies that advertise in MEGA (like Gamesville or Whizz Kid) and if you're happy with the service (which you undoubtedly will be, we even use them ourselves), stick with them. They value regular customers as much as you value quick efficient service and value for money. ***Neil***

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Brighton
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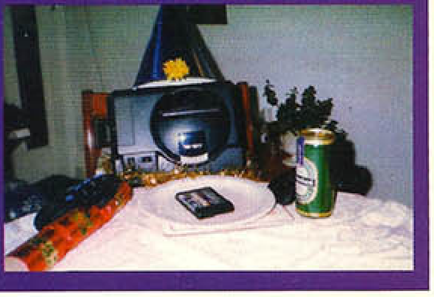
EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY OF A STUNT MEGA DRIVE



Graham Haw of South Shields in Tyne and Wear had a bit of a lonely Christmas it would appear. So bad was it, that he had to resort to dressing his Mega Drive, lunching with it and pretending it was an old friend. Still, Neil does that all the time, so you're not alone Graham.

Send your Stunt Mega Drives to: Stunt Mega Drive, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Each month's winner gets a free cart.

MORE ROLE-PLAYING GAMES PLEASE

Dear MEGA,

Thanks for a great Mega Drive magazine. Forget the other ones, with pages filled with large screenshots and very little text and unrealistic ratings.

But can you tell me when we can expect to see some decent RPGs for the Mega Drive? I've finished *Shining In The Darkness, Sword Of Vermillion* and *Warriors Of The Eternal Sun*. For months now I've been hearing about *Landstalker, Shining Force* etc, but all we seem to get is more platform games, more shoot-'em-ups and more mindless button-thrashing beat-'em-ups.

PS. I'm about to start *Phantasy Star III*.

Glynn Jarvis

The sequel to *Shining In The Darkness* will be here very soon

Dear Glynn,

Isn't it a shame that RPGs seem to have fallen by the wayside a bit of late? But worry not, the two you mentioned are very close at hand. Shining Force *is due out any time now and* Landstalker *isn't far off either. We'll obviously let you know more when we've actually seen the games ourselves. Oh, and good luck with* Phantasy Star III, *you'll need it.* ***Neil***

MEGA STAR

Dear MEGA,

I've just had a Mega Drive bought for me so I bought your mag to find out about games etc. Now being a legacy of Thatcher's Britain, I'm a doley with three years experience of trying to get things on the cheap. What do I find, but free carts for star letters? Did my freebie indicator light up, or what? Now comes the hard part, do I go for the jokey, amusing letter or the serious gamey format? Sorry, but there's not a lot of humour left and there's only one game (*Sonic*) to lift my spirits. Well, here goes nothing.

I was just wondering if there were any plans for a rugby game. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not a rugby fan or anything, it's just that after playing various sports games (mostly on the Amiga) I think it'd be good. Actually I hate sports. I never played football, rugby, hockey, *Speedball 2* etc at school. Well, we played a version of *Speedball 2* called murderball, but that was basically to kick the s**t out of yonder opponents. The only computer game which existed when I was at school was *Space Invaders* – rivetting action in a comatose sort of way.

Having played *John Madden's* on the Amiga I thought I'd prefer rugby, as the play is more fluid. The scrums could be quite nice, the fights excellent, and the scenes in the bar afterwards, with all those huge guts – monumental. Anyway, that's it except for a couple of queries.

As I know sod all about Mega Drives etc, could you explain what a battery back-up is – how it works etc, and do you need any extra equipment for a game with a battery back-up?

Also, could you explain import games? Yes, I know they're from abroad before you come out with comments questioning my (lack of) intelligence, but are the manuals in English? Do they play on UK Mega Drives?

PS. I really am on the dole. My girlfriend bought me the Mega Drive for Christmas. She's the only person in a two-mile radius with a job and consequently gets shot at/ bombed every day in the hope that she'll die and her job becomes available.

Cheers for now.

Neal, Birmingham

Dear Neal,

Well done old boy, against all the odds your rather pathetic plea for help has worked. Now much as we sympathise with your joblessness, there are limits as to how low you can sink. But in this case, you managed to pluck gently at our flexible old heart-strings and have won yourself a prize. We did consider giving your girlie a bullet-proof jacket, but in the end we decided that you'd much rather have a game instead. Expect it in the post sometime in the next, ooh, twelve years.

Anyway, there is a rugby simulator coming out soon, from Domark. It should be available in April and we should be previewing it next issue.

Battery back-ups are dead simple to understand. Normally when you switch off the Mega Drive, your cart goes "dead" and all the data is, if not lost, simply rendered dormant. A battery-backed cart has a small battery inside it which, when you switch off the Mega Drive, allows a small amount of data to remain stored until you switch back on. This is particularly useful with large adventures, when you need to play it in several sittings without losing valuable information like your position and the items and treasures you've discovered and collected. As the battery is already in the cart, you don't need any extra hardware to play the carts.

As for Japanese imports, the in-game text and manuals will both be in Japanese. No problem if you're buying a shoot-'em-up or something, but complex adventures should be left well alone, unless you read Japanese of course. Neil

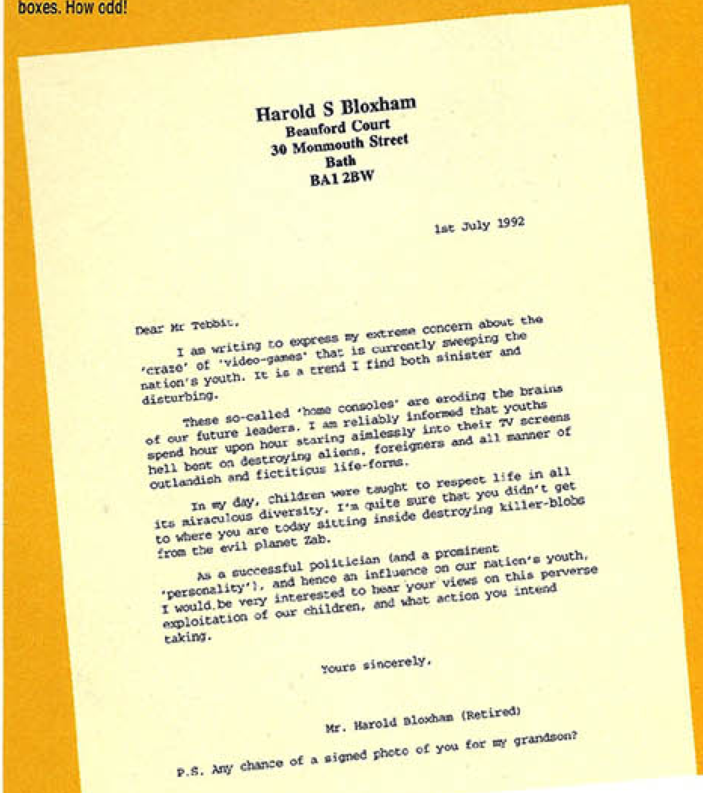
DON'T WRITE TO US...

... if you want to miss out on the chance to win prizes left right and centre. No, if you absolutely abhor the thought of getting a free cart in the post from your favourite Mega Drive magazine, then keep your letters to yourself. On the other hand, if you think that winning £40 worth of cart is a good thing, then send your witty, informative or just plain silly letters to us without delay.

So, whatever it is, get it off your chest and send it to: MEGA MOUTH, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Cheers!

THE CURIOUS LETTERS OF HAROLD S BLOXHAM

Bloxham never gives up. It doesn't matter how many celebrities slap him in the face, he keeps on trying. This time, even Lord Tebbit (famous Tory politician with a reputation for compassion) has trounced Mr B's ridiculous notions. As for poor old Una Stubbs, she seems to have got rather confused about the whole thing and has decided to tell Harold about a strange thing which afflicts actresses. Perhaps they all have an inner ear problem, but apparently they have trouble balancing on soap boxes. How odd!



Harold S Bloxham
Beauford Court
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2BW

1st July 1992

Dear Mr Tebbit.

I am writing to express my extreme concern about the 'craze' of 'video-games' that is currently sweeping the nation's youth. It is a trend I find both sinister and disturbing.

These so-called 'home consoles' are eroding the brains of our future leaders. I am reliably informed that youths spend hour upon hour staring aimlessly into their TV screens hell bent on destroying aliens, foreigners and all manner of outlandish and fictitious life-forms.

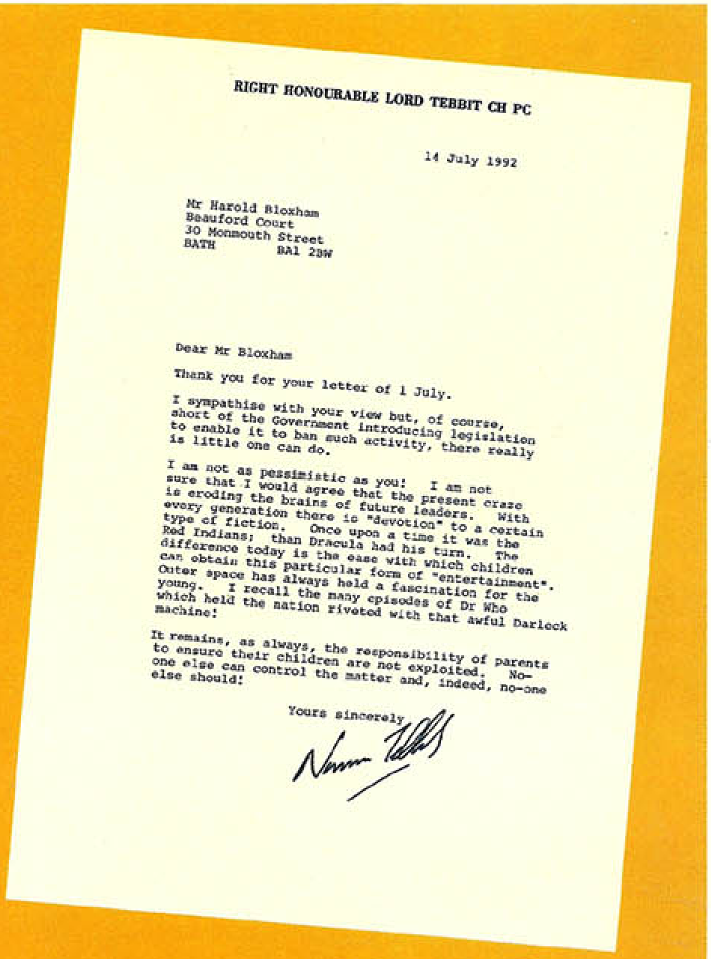
In my day, children were taught to respect life in all its miraculous diversity. I'm quite sure that you didn't get to where you are today sitting inside destroying killer-blobs from the evil planet Zab.

As a successful politician (and a prominent 'personality'), and hence an influence on our nation's youth, I would be very interested to hear your views on this perverse exploitation of our children, and what action you intend taking.

Yours sincerely.

Mr. Harold Bloxham (Retired)

P.S. Any chance of a signed photo of you for my grandson?



RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD TEBBIT CH PC

14 July 1992

Mr Harold Bloxham
Beauford Court
30 Monmouth Street
BATH BA1 2BW

Dear Mr Bloxham

Thank you for your letter of 1 July.

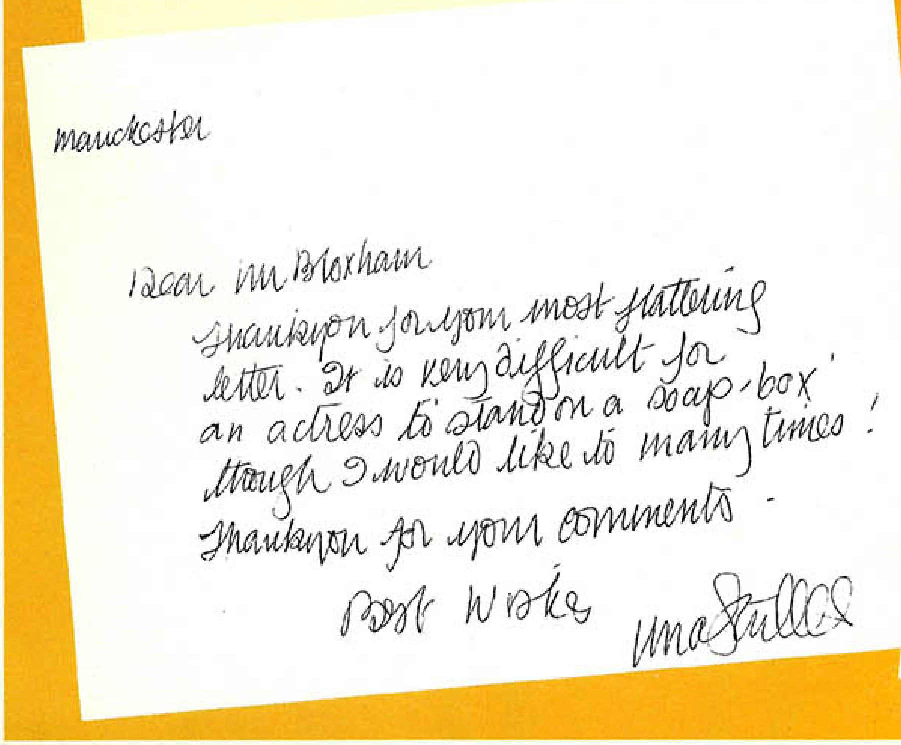
I sympathise with your view but, of course, short of the Government introducing legislation to enable it to ban such activity, there really is little one can do.

I am not as pessimistic as you: I am not sure that I would agree that the present craze is eroding the brains of future leaders. With every generation there is "devotion" to a certain type of fiction. Once upon a time it was the Red Indians; than Dracula had his turn. The difference today is the ease with which children can obtain this particular form of "entertainment". Outer space has always held a fascination for the young. I recall the many episodes of Dr Who which held the nation riveted with that awful Darlock machine!

It remains, as always, the responsibility of parents to ensure their children are not exploited. No-one else can control the matter and, indeed, no-one else should!

Yours sincerely

Norman Tebbit



Manchester

Dear Mr Bloxham

Thankyou for your most flattering letter. It is very difficult for an actress to stand on a soap-box though I would like to many times! Thankyou for your comments.

Best Wishes Una Stubbs

Best Wishes
Una Stubbs

SHUT DOWN

Good God, doesn't time fly. Before we know it, it'll be Christmas again. But before we dwell on such horrors, let's see what's happening in the April issue of MEGA

Prepare yourself for quite an exciting month chaps. The Mega CD is almost upon us (whaddya mean you'll believe it when you see it?), so with luck we'll be able to show you...

DRACULA

Bram Stoker's chilling novel was, um, chilling. Francis Ford Coppola's new film is, by all accounts, brilliant. So as long as Psygnosis have pulled out all the stops, the Mega CD game should be pretty hot too. Find out when we review it next ish.

Neck-biting and blood-guzzling ahoy in Bram Stoker's Dracula (yoiks!)

MEGA TV STARDOM COMPETITION

The existing prize comprises a *Road Rash* leather jacket, *Greendog* and *Sonic 2* T-shirts, a copy of *PGA Tour Golf* and a year's subscription to MEGA. This month we'll be adding a limited edition music CD featuring music from the future Mega CD releases Jurassic Park and Batman Returns, plus a handy storage bag for all your favourite carts.

This is what you have to do. Get yourself on TV holding a copy of MEGA. When the programme you appeared on is shown on telly, video it, and send the tape to us. Make sure you tape enough of the programme to convince us that it wasn't done on the family camcorder, and you'll be in line for the prize. And don't go committing any crimes. Any copies of MEGA appearing on Crimewatch UK will be completely ignored.

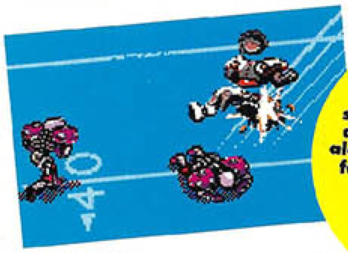
Send your videos to: "Fame, fortune, and a big bag of crap prizes" compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. There's no closing date for this compo, and the longer the compo stays open, the bigger the prize gets. And remember, no one from Future Publishing, or their relatives for that matter, may enter this compo. Got all that? Jolly good!

STREETFIGHTER 2

Yes, that's what we're going for and by the beard of Wotan (to quote Rezo Abdolali, the 1992 Sega European Champion) that's what we're going to get for you.

Capcom are still denying all knowledge of a Mega Drive version, but Sega say it's brill. Corporate confusion ahoy!

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL



Watch the players explode in the bizarre *Mutant League Football*

Electronic Arts' *Madden* with mutants should be finished by the time we're ploughing through the next issue, and if it is, we'll sure as hell be reviewing it. And in case you're one of those mad people who read a mag back to front, there's a preview of *Mutant League Football* on page 22. To get an idea of just how good it turns out, read our full review next month.

RECESSION ALERT!

Due to circumstances way beyond our control, the cover price of this glorious mag will be going up next month to £2.25. It's still a monstrous bargain for the most fact-filled, funny Mega Drive mag in the world, but if you really are gagging on your dinner at the thought of the increased price, zip over to page 86 and subscribe. That way you not only get twelve issues at the old price, but you also get an additional two issues free. That's right, fourteen issues for the price of twelve. Do it now!

TIPS

Ecco is a big game, so we'll be giving you a few tips next month along with a level select for *Streets Of Rage 2*, plus loads more

ISSUE 7 out on Thursday 18 March

AND MORE...

What else? Gulp, We, um, gosh... we are most definitely going to send Violet Berlin (famed presenter of ITV's Bad Influence!) out and about to do a special feature for us. We will also be bringing you our biggest previews section ever (well, second only to the one we did a couple of months ago, oh, and the one before that... but anyway), and that's as well as all the usual terrific reviews, spank-tastic tips and, er, the rest of the stuff which we can't quite recall at the moment. Be here, or, um, don't. It's entirely up to you really, but it'll be a rivetting read, honest!

THE As ON THE BACK PAGE

Don't look below this paragraph unless you've already been to page 11 to answer all the Sega-related questions. There are no prizes for this one, it's simply for your delight and delectation. Right, let's see how you did...

1. Tom Kalinske
2. £12,000,000
3. Four
4. Gnu
5. Las Vegas
6. *Spiderman*
7. Toy vehicles
8. *PGA Tour Golf, World CLass Leaderboard, Arnold Palmer, Zany Golf, Battle Golfer*
9. *John Madden, Joe Montana, Super High Impact, Mike Ditka Power Football*
10. *LHX Attack Chopper, Desert Strike, Super Thunderblade, Steel Talons, Super Airwolf, Thunderstorm FX*
11. Peroxide blonde
12. National Hockey League Player's Association
13. Hulk Hogan, The Ultimate Warrior, Ted Dibiase, British Bulldog, Shawn Michaels, Randy Savage, Irwin R Shyster, Papa Shango
14. On an oil rig
15. Electronic Arts
16. *Outlander*
17. *Rolo To The Rescue*
18. *Ecco*
19. *Mega-Lo-Mania*
20. *Chakan*

1 – 8 points: Ho-ho, you sad, mad fool.

9 – 14 points: Snigger! Not much cop, eh?

15 – 17 points: Mmm, I see. Getting a bit sure of ourselves, aren't we? You ain't quite there yet though matey.

18 – 20 points: Blimey, wot a hero. The burning question though, is why is the MEGA team such a pathetic collection of berks when there are Sega stars like you around?

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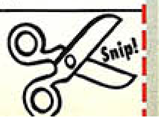
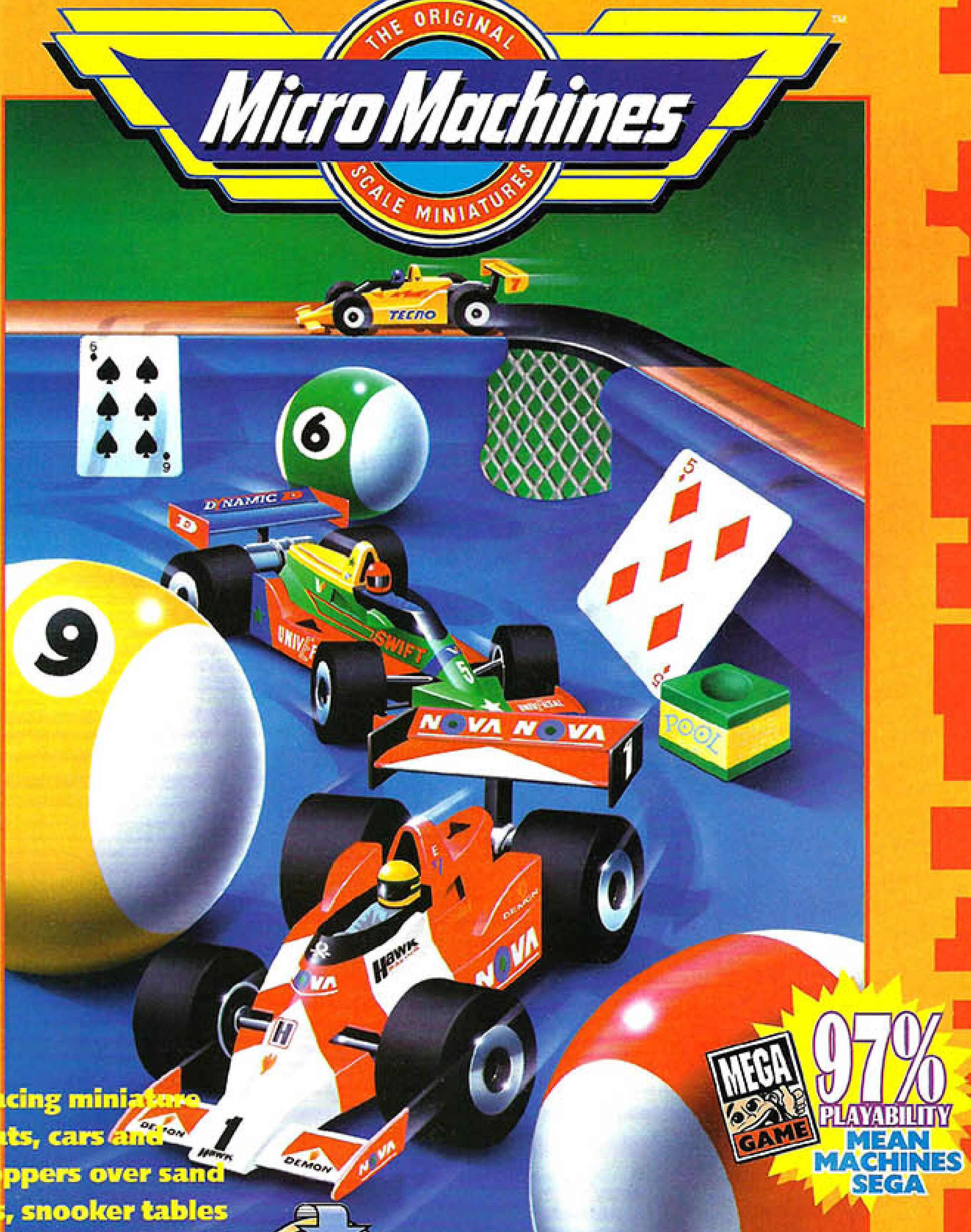


"ONE OF THE BEST 2-PLAYER MEGADRIVE GAMES EVER!"

Said Mean Machines' Radion playing Micro Machines. He likes it.



"Racing miniature boats, cars and choppers over sand pits, snooker tables and breakfast mats! It may sound weird but it's hellish addictive! Dodge orange juice stains, jump over playing cards and into snooker pockets - simply brilliant!"
N-Force

This Codemasters game cartridge product is compatible with the 16-BIT console from Sega Enterprises, Ltd.
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Before the Megadrive,™ Micro Machines was this good...

TOTAL! 92% MEGA ZONE 92% PLAYABILITY N-FORCE MEGA GAME

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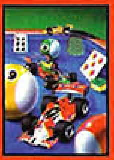
Micro Machines

"ACTION VIDEO GAME OF THE YEAR"
VG&CE, USA



This top game is an essential video game happening! If you haven't got it...

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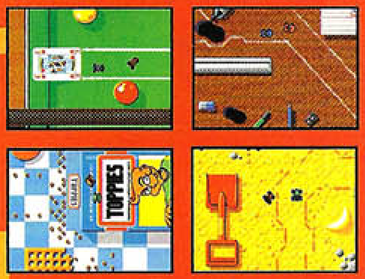

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HE'S BACK... JAMES BOND

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RELEASE DATE 007 APRIL

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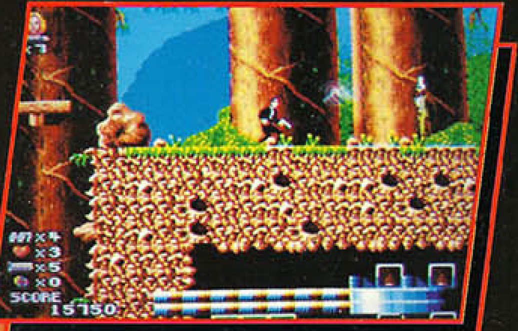
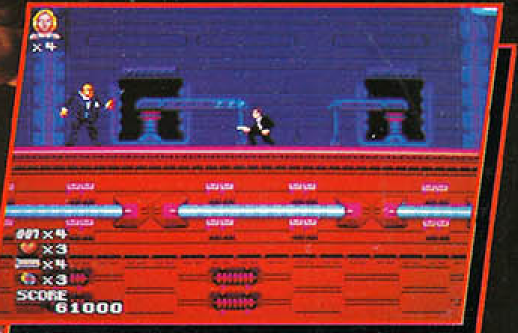
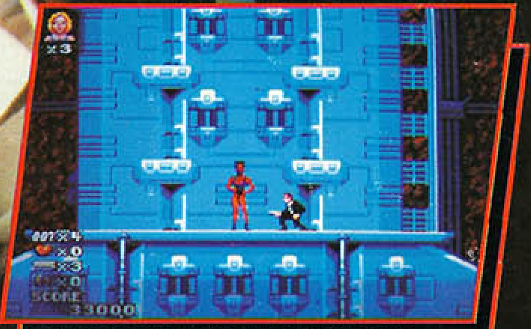
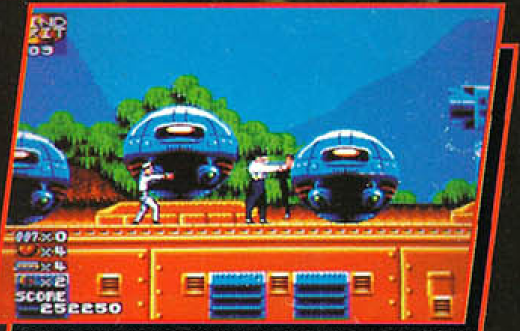
DOMARK


SHARP GREETINGS FROM BONES


BE CAREFUL ODDJOB DOESN'T TAKE HIS HAT OFF FOR YOU


MAYDAY, NOT ONE TO CALL ON IF YOUR IN TROUBLE!


BOND, A GAME TO HOLD YOU IN ITS GRIPS TO THE BITTER END!

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MEGA

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